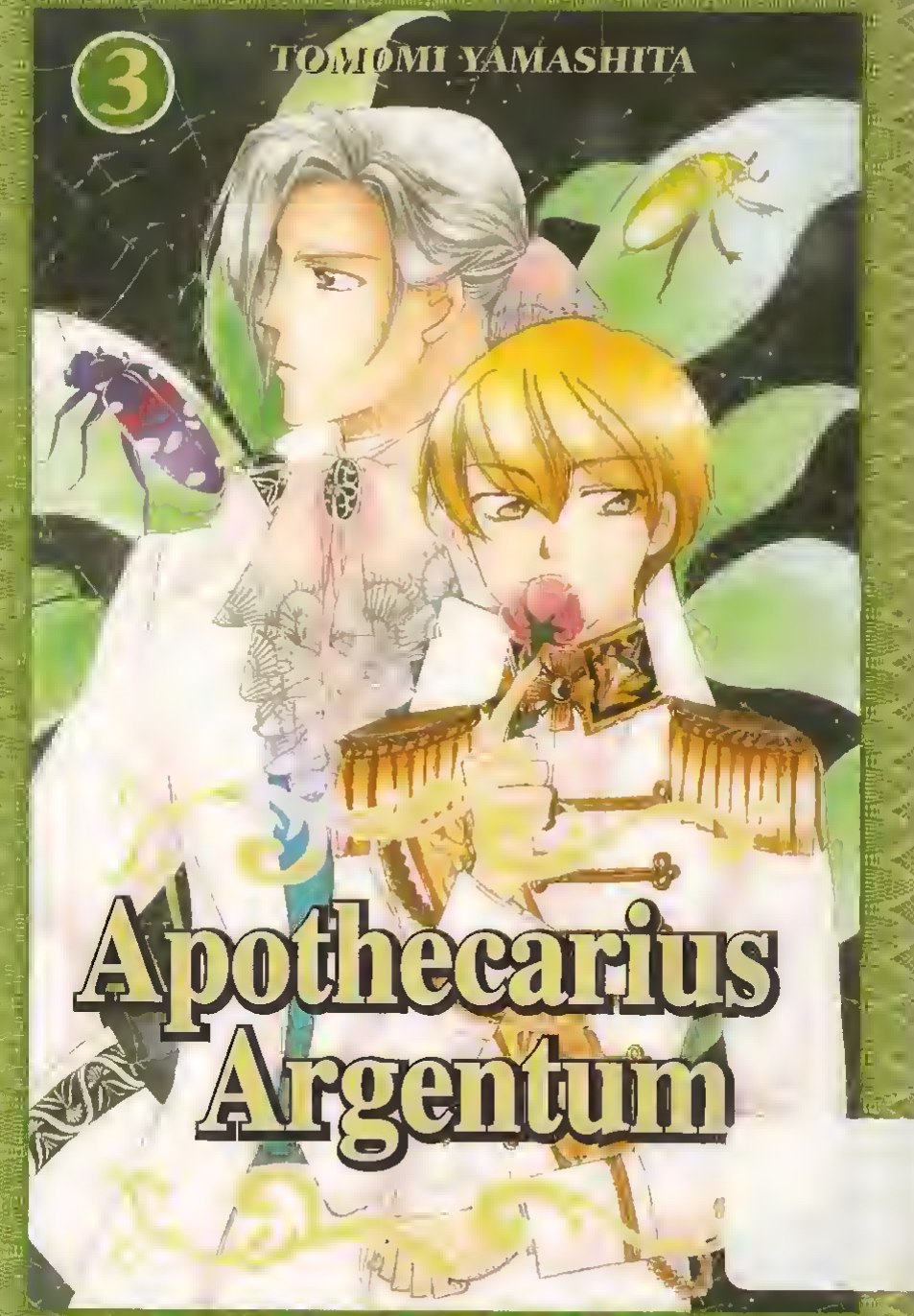
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TOMOMI YAMASHITA
Apothecarius Argentum

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Volume 3

By Tomomi Yamashita

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Character Introductions / The Story So Far

Argent was a slave and fed poison during his youth to turn him into the ultimate assassin. The King of Beazol bought Argent to be the food taster for his young daughter. However, the Princess freed Argent and instructed him to flee from the palace.

Years later, Argent reappears as a skilled healer and saves the Princess from an assassination attempt. As a result, he's promoted to the position of Royal Apothecary. Along with Soda, his apprentice, Argent works tirelessly for the people.

IN BEAZOL, THERE'S A MAN CALLED ARGENT, ALSO KNOWN AS THE "SILVER APOTHECARY." DESPITE HIS YOUTH, HE'S THE ROYAL APOTHECARY.
HIS FLOWING PLATINUM LOCKS REMINDS ONE OF A FAERIE KING AS ARGENT AND HIS FAITHFUL GOBLIN ATTEND TO THE PRINCESS.
RUMOR CLAIMS HE CAN HEAL ANY ILLNESS...

Apothecarius Argentum
Recipe 9 • Princess of Steel and the Silver Apothecary

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, YOUNG LADY?
DON'T WORRY, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THAT FOR YOU.
IF THIS IS A DREAM, I DON'T WANT TO WAKE UP...
ARGENT, THE SILVER APOTH-ECARY...
HE'S THE PRINCE OF MY HEART.
WHAT? SILVER APOTHECARY?
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU MUMBLING ABOUT?
WHEN I WOKE UP, I DIDN'T SEE THE SILVER APOTHECARY, THE PRINCE OF MY HEART...

HOW ARE YA GONNA PAY US FOR THE DAMAGES?!
THIS IS A BUSY ROAD, WOMAN! WHAT WERE YOU DOING SPEEDING YOUR WAGON LIKE NO TOMORROW! THANKS TO YOU, OUR WAGON'S WRECKED!
DAMN GIRL'S PASSED OUT AGAIN.
FLOP
... KNOW ...
PAY...? I... DON'T...
I WAS BORN ON A PEAR ORCHARD 17 YEARS AGO. I TEND THE ORCHARD AND TRANSPORT THE PEARS TO THE MARKET.
THERE WERE SKIRMISHES ALONG THE BORDER WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, BUT THE INTERIOR IS RELATIVELY PEACEFUL.
MY NAME IS UBELLA. I'M A CITIZEN OF A SMALL COUNTRY CALLED BEAZOL.
DARN IT! YOU CAN NEVER COUNT ON WOMEN!

!!
GET OUTTA THE WAY!
I WAS DAYDREAMING ABOUT THE CASTLE AS I WAS DRIVING MY WAGON...
CLATTER CLATTER
CLATTER CLATTER
CLATTER
THE PRINCESS OF BEAZOL IS THE SAME AGE AS ME.
LIFE IS SO UNFAIR... SHE GETS TO SPEND HER DAYS WITH THE MAN OF MY DREAMS...
Back from market
CLATTER
CLATTER
CLATTER
OH!
I'M SORRY! I'LL REIMBURSE YOU FOR THE DAMAGE!
I'M FINE. HOW ABOUT YOU?
I'M GLAD YOU'RE AWAKE.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, YOUNG LADY?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT OUR CARGO. WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH FOR YOU TO REIMBURSE.

WE DO HAVE TO GET TO THE CASTLE FOR BUSINESS.
THIS IS OUR FIRST TIME IN BEAZOL. WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
IF YOU DON'T MIND RIDING IN MY WAGON, I CAN TAKE YOU THERE.
REALLY?! THAT WOULD HELP US SOO MUCH.
I'M TOYA. THIS IS INFREE. THANKS FOR THE RIDE!
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
I WASN'T BORN TO BE A DAZZLING STAR... THIS IS MY FATE.
UBELLA ....

PRIMULA, YOUR 17TH BIRTHDAY IS COMING UP IN A WEEK. DO YOU WANT ANYTHING?
NOT REALLY.
ACTUALLY, I LEARNED A NEW MIME RECENTLY.
I THOUGHT I WOULD PERFORM IT AT YOUR PARTY.
She's not even looking
LADY PRIMULA'S PREOCCUPIED. IT'S RARE FOR HER TO HAVE A CHANCE TO DINE WITH HER FATHER.
OF COURSE. SHE'S BEEN GROUNDED AND STUCK IN THE CASTLE FOR A MONTH.
I KNOW SHE WAS LEAVING TO ADMINISTER AID TO HER PEOPLE, BUT LEAVING THE CASTLE WITHOUT PERMISSION ...
AND SQUARING OFF WITH PRINCE TRILDAN, LEADER OF THE REBELLION...
Milking a cow
That stinks
SHE WAS RATHER RECKLESS.
SHE'S UNDER RESTRICTION FOR 3 MORE DAYS. SHE'S PROBABLY AT HER WIT'S END.
I'M SURE SHE IS.
SO ARE WE...
GNNH ...

FATHER, WHAT'S WRONG?
MY CHEST! CAN'T BREATHE ...
YOUR MAJESTY!
HURRY! CALL THE APOTHECARY!
ARGENT'S ALSO UNDER HOUSE ARREST AND BANNED FROM THE PALACE!
HE CAN'T ENTER THE CASTLE FOR 3 MORE DAYS!
IN THAT CASE ...!
ARGENT'S NO LONGER UNDER HOUSE ARREST.
ARGENT THE ROYAL APOTHECARY, PRESENT FOR DUTY!
SODA, THE ROYAL APOTHECARY'S ASSISTANT, PRESENT FOR DUTY!
HOW IS THE KING?

HE'S FEELING BETTER?
HE FELT BETTER AFTER PASSING GAS.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU CAUSED SUCH A COMMOTION!
I COULDN'T *FART* IN FRONT OF MY DEAR DAUGHTER! I WAS TRYING TO HOLD IT IN!
I'M SORRY, ARGENT.
Stop that!
THRUST
RUB RUB
WHAT IS THIS?
YOUR MEDICINE.
I SAID I FEEL BETTER.
EXCUSE ME, YOUR MAJESTY. YOU STILL LOOK SOMEWHAT PALE.
THIS IS A TONIC.
I DON'T NEED IT!
I CAN'T TRUST YOUR SHODDY MEDICINES!
THAT IS ABSOLUTELY YOUR RIGHT, YOUR MAJESTY. HOWEVER, AT YOUR AGE, IT'S IMPORTANT TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO YOUR HEALTH.

BUT...
NOBODY IS UNDER HOUSE ARREST ANYMORE! DO AS YOU PLEASE!!
PRIMULA, PLEASE HAVE THE SERVANTS PREPARE TEA FOR OUR GUESTS.
YOU SHOULD AT LEAST STAY FOR TEA.
WAIT.
YOU SEEM HEALTHY ENOUGH. SODA, WE'RE LEAVING.
THANK YOU, FATHER!
!
SLAM
YOUR MAJESTY, YOU'RE RATHER GRUFF.
EITHER WAY, IF YOU'RE FEELING BETTER, YOU SHOULD LOOK THROUGH THESE REPORTS.
I'VE GOT MORE, EH?
WE'VE GOT REQUESTS FROM VARIOUS FOREIGN ROYALTY ASKING FOR THE PRINCESS' AUDIENCE.

THE PRINCESS' CONDUCT HAS TRAVELED FAR AND WIDE...
My daughter's number one!
SO MY DAUGHTER'S GOOD WORKS HAVE SPREAD PAST OUR BORDERS...
ACTUALLY, THAT'S NOT QUITE THE SITUATION...
HOW WERE YOU DURING YOUR HOUSE ARREST?
I HAD A LOT OF EMERGENCY PATIENTS.
MEDICAL EMERGENCIES DON'T OCCUR ACCORDING TO MY SCHEDULE.
THAT'S TRUE.
THEY'RE BOTH BEING SO AWKWARD ...
I can't bear to watch-
I CAN UNDERSTAND, AFTER WHAT HAPPENED.
I'M SURE LADY PRIMULA KNOWS HOW ARGENT FEELS AT THIS POINT...

I...
IS THIS THE MOMENT ...?!
ARGENT, I'VE BEEN WAITING TO SEE YOU ALL THIS TIME.
I HAVE TO ASK YOU SOME-THING...
I COOKED UP SOME RECIPES. WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY THEM?
I LEARNED HOW TO COOK AT THE BORDER CAMP.
I'VE HAD A LOT OF TIME ON MY HANDS, SO I TRIED MANY RECIPES. PEOPLE REFUSE TO TRY THEM OUT...
I'm sure!
I HAVE ERRANDS TO RUN!
YOU DON'T WANT TO, EITHER?

SURE, I'LL BE YOUR FOOD TASTER.
WOOHOO! AFTER ALL, YOU WERE MY FOOD TASTER BEFORE!
HE'S GOTTA LOVE HER TO EVEN TRY THAT SCARY LOOKIN' STUFF.
CREEP CREEP
I'M SURE MY MASTER CAN HANDLE IT, OF ALL PEOPLE...
THUD
OH CARL! IT'S BEEN A WHILE!
RIGHT, YOU'RE ALSO NO LONGER UNDER HOUSE ARREST.
THAT MEANS YOU'RE GOING TO BE PRETTY BUSY AS HER ETIQUETTE INSTRUCTOR AGAIN!
YES, I'LL HAVE MORE WORK AHEAD NOW...

5 Days Before The Birthday Celebration
"CARLI, YOU DIDN'T KNOW?"
"MY MASTER'S BODY IS POISONOUS."
"HE WAS A BASILISK TRAINED TO BE AN ASSASSIN."
How is it? Are you sure this won't kill you?
"HIS UNIQUE BODY ALLOWS HIM TO BE A FOOD TASTER AND AN APOTHECARY."
CLATTER
HOW LONG UNTIL WE REACH THE CASTLE?
WE'VE BEEN ON THE ROAD FOR AN ENTIRE DAY, SO TWO MORE DAYS? WILL THAT BE SOON ENOUGH?
I JUST NEED TO BE THERE FOR THE PRINCESS' BIRTHDAY.
OH, IT'S ALMOST THAT TIME OF YEAR.
HOW NICE. I BET PRINCES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD GATHER TO GIVE HER GIFTS.
Oh wow! A diamond!
COMPARED TO THAT, I'M HAVING TO GIVE RIDES TO STRANGE MERCHANTS ...
WHAT KIND OF MERCHANTS ARE THEY?
OUR CARGO'S GONE BAD.
TOSS IT. WE'LL EXCHANGE THEM FOR FRESH GOODS.
ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT ME?
DON'T WORRY. WE'RE NOT IN THE BUSINESS OF TRADING "PEOPLE."
Fresh Goods

TOYA, WHERE ARE YOU FROM?
OVER THERE!
??
That way?
FROM NAVARA. WE TRAVELED THROUGH CASTORIA AND AROUND THE PIREE MOUNTAINS.
WHAT ARE OTHER COUNTRIES LIKE? I HEARD IN CASTORIA, BUILDINGS AND CLOTHES ARE EMBROIDERED WITH JEWELS.
IN NAVARA, TECHNOLOGY HAS MADE FARMING LESS LABOR INTENSIVE SO FARMERS SPEND THEIR DAYS NAPPING.
SO THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE HERE THINK OF NAVARA...
COME AGAIN?
TELL ME MORE ABOUT BEAZOL.
WHAT'S THE KING LIKE?
I HEAR HE'S GOT A MOUNTAINOUS PRESENCE AND A PHILOSOPHER'S INTELLECT. PEOPLE SAY HE'S THE KING OF KINGS.
I hear he spoils his daughter like no tomorrow...
THAT'S WHAT I'VE HEARD, TOO. WHAT ABOUT THE PRINCESS?

SO, ARE THE RUMORS TRUE?
I HEARD THE PRINCESS OF STEEL ONCE DIED, BUT MIRACULOUSLY CAME BACK FROM DEATH.
SHE'S INCREDIBLY STRONG LIKE STEEL, CAN BEST A STRONG MAN, AND RUNS AROUND NAKED!
What do we do...
She will need to be married...
She won't find a suitor...
THIS IS ONE OF THE RECENT RUMORS ABOUT THE PRINCESS.
SHE DOESN'T ATTEND PUBLIC FUNCTIONS, SO I KNEW THERE WERE RUMORS FLOATING ABOUT. THEY'VE GOTTEN WORSE LATELY...
THAT'S WHY PEOPLE WANT TO MEET HER...
I'M SURE PEOPLE DON'T BELIEVE THE RUMOR IN ITS ENTIRETY, BUT IT CERTAINLY PIQUES THEIR INTEREST.
WE SHOULD PROBABLY START MOVING FORWARD WITH OUR PLAN. AFTER ALL, THE COUNTRY'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT.
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG

DON'T YOU FEEL THAT IT'S TOO SOON?
CLANG CLANG
One more round!
LADY PRIMULA RUNS AROUND NAKED?
THAT'S HILARIOUS!
Well, it's not too far from the truth...
GIGGLE GIGGLE GIGGLE
HERE'S YOUR MEDICINE.
YEAH, THAT SOUNDS ABOUT RIGHT!
WAIT, THAT MEANS I'M A GOBLIN?!
HOWEVER, THE ROYAL APOTHECARY'S A BEAUTIFUL MAN WITH PLATINUM HAIR REMINISCENT OF A FAERIE KING.
HIS ASSISTANT IS LIKE A LITTLE GOBLIN...
I'M NOT SURE WHO THEY'RE HERE TO SEE... ARGENT OR THE PRINCESS.
I SEE, PEOPLE ARE GATHERING NEAR THE CASTLE FOR LADY PRIMULA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION.
THEY'RE BOTH SUBJECT OF RUMORS.
WHAT?
It's made by the finest craftsmen
I HEAR YOU LOVE SILVER JEWELRY AND PERFUME, SO I HAD THIS MADE FOR YOU.

YOU'VE MET HER BEFORE?
ONCE, SHE VISITED MY PEAR ORCHARD.
THE PRINCESS DESERVES THE BAD PRESS. AFTER ALL, SHE'S A SPOILED, GLUTTONOUS GIRL.
WHO CAN BLAME PEOPLE FOR SPEAKING ILL OF HER?
THAT'S NOT TRUE! HE'S ACTUALLY THE PRIDE OF OUR COUNTRY!
WELL, THE SILVER APOTHECARY COULD BE A FRAUD.
HE COULD BE JUST A GRAY-HAIRED OLD MAN.
SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, CADOCAEUS, A MYSTERIOUS ORGANIZATION FROM THE EAST, HAS ENGAGED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICINE AND ALCHEMY.
JUST HIS PRESENCE AS THE ROYAL APOTHECARY BRINGS LIGHT TO OUR COUNTRY AND HEALS THE VILLAGERS.
A BASILISK IS A HUMAN WEAPON TRAINED AS A POISONER FROM INFANCY TO BECOME... A MERCENARY ASSASSIN.

I APPRECIATE YOUR KINDNESS.
ARE YOU SURE?
This would look good on you
WHERE DO THESE RUMORS COME FROM?
7 people wanted to give me gifts...
CLEANING UP
YOU SHOULD HAVE TAKEN THEIR GIFTS OF APPRECIATION.
SODA, DID YOU KNOW THAT ROYALTY USED TO PROVIDE FOOD TASTERS WITH EATING UTENSILS MADE OF SILVER?
"DEAR GOD! THAT BURNS!"
"MY BLOOD IS TOXIC! YOU'LL GET BURNED..."
PEOPLE BELIEVED THAT SILVER REACTS WITH POISON TO TURN BLACK.
IT ONLY TURNS DARK IN THE PRESENCE OF A FEW POISONS, BUT SILVER WILL TARNISH IN REACTION TO MY BODY.
SO I SHOULD NOT TOUCH ANYTHING OR ANYONE MORE THAN NECESSARY.
It'll get better soon
BASILISKS ARE LEGENDARY MONSTERS THAT EXUDE POISON FROM THEIR ENTIRE BODY.
THEY CAN FOCUS THEIR BODILY POISON INTO DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE BODY TO BRING DEATH TO THEIR VICTIMS.

"YOUR HANDS MAY MAKE FLOWERS WILT AND DIE."
"YOU USED TO HAVE THE HANDS OF DEATH. YOU'VE CHANGED THEM TO HANDS OF LIFE."
SLAM
I NEED TO FOCUS ON WHAT I CAN DO.
I CAN MAKE CERTAIN DRUGS BECAUSE MY BODY CAN TOLERATE THE PROCESS AND EXPOSURE REQUIRED TO MAKE THEM.
"THERE MUST BE SOMETHING YOU CAN DO."
I TOLD YOU I'LL REMOVE THE POISONS FROM YOUR BODY ONE DAY! DON'T BE SUCH A WRETCH!
C'MON! STOP THINKING ABOUT THAT!
I'M NOT BEING A WRETCH.

4 days prior to the Birthday Celebration.
BITTER.
HOW DOES IT TASTE, SODA?
WHY DOES IT GET SO BITTER?
YOU'RE NOT STRAINING ENOUGH TO REMOVE THE HARSHNESS.
Really?
YEAH.
SO THAT'S ALL YOU CAN DO, MASTER?
I'm sure it's better that no one else eats this and gets an upset stomach..
PLANTS CAN CONTAIN BITTER CHEMICALS THAT CAN CAUSE DIGESTIVE PROBLEMS.
THE BITTERNESS CAN BE MEDICINAL, BUT IT'S GOOD TO REMOVE FROM FOOD.
OH! NOW I KNOW WHY YOUR MEDICATIONS ARE SO BITTER!
I KNOW MY MEDICATIONS ARE DISTASTEFUL AND UNPOPULAR.
ACTUALLY YOU DID TASTE A BIT BITTER...

What are you trying to say?
I DON'T MIND BITTERNESS LIKE I USED TO. AFTER ALL, I'M TURNING 17.
PLOP

PRINCESS, THIS IS ENOUGH.
I'LL BET THAT LADY PRIMULA'S TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW ARGENT FEELS ABOUT HER.
KYAAAAH
PLOP PLOP
IN THAT CASE, YOU SHOULD EAT YOUR BELL PEPPERS.
Phew

DON'T YOU SEE THAT THE CHEFS CAN'T GET THEIR WORK DONE BECAUSE YOU'VE TAKEN OVER THEIR KITCHEN?
BUT...
I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE ELATED TO HAVE YOUR FREEDOM BACK, BUT YOUR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IS COMING UP. YOU HAVE LOTS TO FINISH BEFORE THEN.
CARLI?

I'LL STOP RIGHT AWAY!
I'M SORRY!
PLEASE HAVE MORE REGARD FOR YOUR POSITION.
ARGENT, YOUR JOB IS NOT TO TEACH LADY PRIMULA HOW TO COOK.
I'LL GET RIGHT TO IT.
THEY WERE BLUE FOR THE HARVEST FESTIVAL, SO I'D LIKE SCARLET ONES THIS TIME!
ARGENT, WILL YOU PREPARE THOSE COLORFUL FIREWORKS FOR MY CELEBRATION?
CARLI'S BEEN ACTING STRANGE LATELY.
Is he going through menopause?
"BOUQUETS, JEWELS, WHATEVER YOUR HEART DESIRES..."
"PRINCESS, TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT AS YOUR GIFT."

"I DO NOT DESIRE ANYTHING AT ALL..."
"...BECAUSE I HAVE YOU, ARGENT, MY SILVER TREASURE..."
YOU'RE A PRETTY GOOD ARTIST!
HEY, HOW DID YOU FIND MY-!!
I TRIED TO WAKE YOU UP.
♡
DON'T TOUCH ME THERE!
SHOVE
POKE POKE
TOYA!
TOYA...?
I'M FINE.
UBELLA, LET'S TAKE A DETOUR.
SNAP

I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN A HURRY?
I JUST NEED TO MAKE IT TO THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION.
YOU SEEM TIRED. LET'S REST.
I LIKE BEAZOL. I WANT TO LIVE HERE SOMEDAY.
REALLY? I DON'T LIKE FLOWERS OR THIS COUNTRY.
FLOWERS ARE PRETTY, BUT THEY'RE NOT VERY PRACTICAL.
THIS COUNTRY'S SO NICE!
BOKU BOKU
LOTS OF PRETTY FLOWERS AND BUGS.
WHAT IS THIS PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER? I'VE SEEN IT BLOOMING ALONG THE WAY.
YOU DON'T KNOW? THAT'S A PRIMROSE. THE PRINCESS IS NAMED AFTER IT, SO IT'S PRIZED IN OUR COUNTRY.

GRASS ALWAYS LOOKS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE.
BEAZOL'S A SLEEPY, BORING PLACE. IF I WAS TO BE REINCARNATED, I'D PREFER TO BE BORN SOMEWHERE ELSE.
NAVARA MIGHT BE TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED, BUT FARMERS HAVE GOTTEN LAZY ABOUT TENDING THE SOIL. AS A RESULT, THE LAND IS BECOMING LESS FERTILE.
TAKE CASTORIA. THEIR MINES ARE ALMOST EXHAUSTED.
THINGS MAY LOOK BETTER ON THE SURFACE, BUT EVERYONE'S PAYING A PRICE IN SOME WAY.
REALITY CAN BE VERY DIFFER-ENT FROM YOUR IMAGINA-TION.
NOW I SEE WHY NAVARA WANTS OUR LAND.

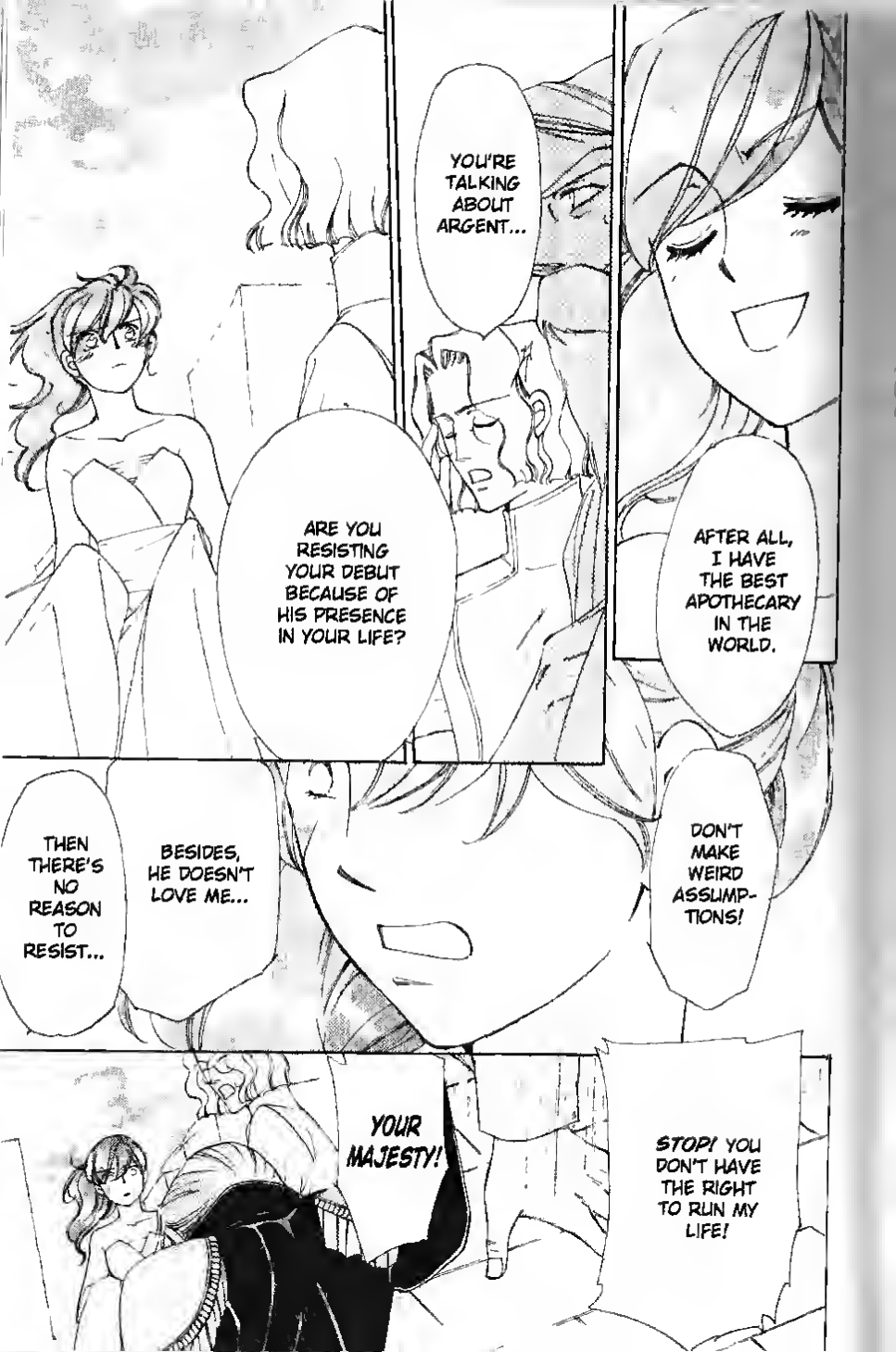
Jergol
Navara
NAVARA'S NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY LOOKING TO EXPAND HER BORDERS. SMALLER NATIONS ARE UNITING IN THE SOUTH TO BECOME A LARGER EMPIRE.
BEAZOL MAY NOT HAVE ANY IMPRESSIVE TECHNOLOGY, BUT THE KING'S COMMAND HAS MAINTAINED OUR COUNTRY'S PRODUCTION.
RESOURCES ARE NOT INFINITE. IT'S DIFFICULT TO REVIVE SPENT SOIL.
THE SOIL IS ALIVE.
THIS IS NOT A TIME TO BE SQUABBLING WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES OVER OUR BORDERS.
I REMEMBER CARL MENTIONING THAT...
I'VE BEEN PUTTING A LOT OF THOUGHT IN TO THIS. I WENT TO THE BORDER FOR A REASON!
NO, YOU SAID SOME-THING RIGHT!
DID I SAY SOMETHING WRONG?
...

I ADMIT I'VE BEEN IGNO-RANT.
IF I HAD KNOWN MORE, THERE MAY HAVE BEEN FEWER VICTIMS.
THIS IS ENOUGH FOR TODAY.
SLAM
ONCE YOU TAKE THE THRONE, YOU'LL HAVE TO GO BEYOND BEAZOL'S BORDERS.
THERE'S MORE.
"IT'S NOT AS FAR AWAY AS YOU THINK, MY LADY."
"SHE'S AN IMPORTANT PERSON WHO WILL RULE OVER US AND GIVE BIRTH TO HER HEIR!"
"ARGENT, PLEASE PROTECT THE TOMBOY PRINCESS!"
"WE'LL BE LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR REIGN, LADY PRIMULA."
THAT WON'T BE ANYTIME SOON...
In a few days, the Celebration will be filled with yummy food.

Day Before Birthday Celebration
THIS DRESS IS TOO TIGHT! I WON'T BE ABLE TO EAT AS MUCH AS I WANT!
LADY PRIMULA, YOU'RE TURNING 17. SIR CARLI HAS DIRECTED ME TO CREATE MORE AGE-APPROPRIATE ATTIRE.
TWIRL
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, MY LADY? WE'RE NOT FINISHED!
I'M GOING TO GO COMPLAIN TO CARLI.
SO YOU'RE AWARE OF ARGENT'S TRUE IDENTITY?
I PURCHASED HIM TO PROTECT MY DAUGHTER'S LIFE.
I'M MERELY THE PRINCESS' ETIQUETTE INSTRUCTOR. I KNOW THIS IS NOT MY PLACE TO INTERFERE, BUT...
"DON'T YOU WANT TO COME WITH ME?"
"IT'S A SIMPLE ENOUGH JOB. YOU JUST HAVE TO TASTE MY DAUGHTER'S FOOD BEFORE SHE DOES."
"IF YOU REFUSE, I'LL KILL YOU RIGHT NOW FOR YOUR INSOLENCE."

I RECOGNIZE THAT ARGENT WAS A SUPERIOR FOOD TASTER. HE'S ALSO SAVED LADY PRIMULA'S LIFE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.
AT FIRST I WAS PLEASED ... THAT THEY WERE INTERACTING WITH EACH OTHER LIKE SIBLINGS.
DESPITE HIS FEELINGS, HE'S THE PERFECT INDIVIDUAL TO PROTECT MY DAUGHTER. I'M UTILIZING HIM PRECISELY FOR THAT PURPOSE.
I KNOW THAT ARGENT'S FEELINGS FOR HER GO BEYOND THAT OF MERE LOYALTY.
PUSH
Who's talking?
IF THEY BECOME CLOSER, ANY BENEFIT WILL QUICKLY TURN INTO HARM.
HOWEVER, THEY'RE NOT CHILDREN ANYMORE.
IF ARGENT MUST REMAIN CLOSE TO THE PRINCESS, THEN I BELIEVE THE BEST ACTION IS TO CHOOSE HER FUTURE HUSBAND DURING THE DEBUTANTE BALL TOMORROW.

MY FUTURE HUSBAND? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
PRINCES FROM NEARBY COUNTRIES HAVE HEARD RUMORS ABOUT YOU. THEY'RE GOING TO GATHER TO ASK FOR YOUR HAND.
YOU'RE TURNING 17. IT'S IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO LOOK TO THE FUTURE AND HOLD A FORMAL DEBUTANTE BALL TO SEARCH FOR YOUR FUTURE HUSBAND.
HOW DARE YOU DECIDE WITHOUT CONSULTING ME! THAT'S STILL FAR INTO THE FUTURE!
UNFORTUNATELY, THIS MAY SOUND HARSH, BUT THERE ARE LIBELOUS RUMORS CIRCULATING ABOUT YOUR FEMININITY.
PEOPLE THINK YOU'RE A BARBARIC WOMAN THAT TROMPS AROUND NAKED.
EXTENDING YOUR DEBUT WILL ONLY FUEL THE RUMORS.
YOU'RE THE HEIR TO THE THRONE, AND YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTINUING THE ROYAL FAMILY. JUST IN CASE...
I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING WHEN THE SITUATION ARISES!


YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT ARGENT...
ARE YOU RESISTING YOUR DEBUT BECAUSE OF HIS PRESENCE IN YOUR LIFE?
AFTER ALL, I HAVE THE BEST APOTHECARY IN THE WORLD.
DON'T MAKE WEIRD ASSUMP-TIONS!
BESIDES, HE DOESN'T LOVE ME...
THEN THERE'S NO REASON TO RESIST...
YOUR MAJESTY!
STOP! YOU DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO RUN MY LIFE!

THAT'S NOT GOING TO WORK THIS TIME, FATHER...
NO, THIS IS DIFFERENT.
TOMORROW'S THE CELEBRATION. INFREE'S GETTING THE SUPPLIES I NEED...
WE SHOULD GO SEE YOUR SILVER APOTHECARY TONIGHT!
WHY? WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO THERE?
WE'RE FINALLY NEAR THE CASTLE!
YOU CAN PRETEND TO BE SICK OR SOMETHING.
I'D RATHER JUST WATCH FROM AFAR...
THAT'S ALL RIGHT.
I'LL CALL FOR ARGENT!

WHAT?
YOU JUST WANT TO PLAY SAFE AND LEAD A BORING LIFE!
THAT'S WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU!
I'M NOT TRYING TO PLAY SAFE BECAUSE I WANT TO!
THIS KID'S SHOWING HIS TRUE COLORS!
I'M JUST A COMMONER WITH NO WEALTH!
I WAS BORN TO LEAD A BORING LIFE AS A MERE PEASANT!
YOU HAVE NO DESIRE TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR OWN LIFE!
PEOPLE CAN CHOOSE TO PLAY SAFE OR BE BOLD! WEALTH AND POWER CAN LIMIT YOUR OPTIONS!

I'M GOING TO GO SEE THE "PRINCESS OF STEEL."
WHERE ARE YOU GOING? DON'T LEAVE ME BY MYSELF!
IF YOU BASE YOUR LIFE ON RUMORS AND FANTASY, YOU'RE BOUND TO LEAD AN UNREMARK-ABLE LIFE.
HE HAD A STRESS RELATED HEART SPASM.
THE KING HASN'T RESTED SINCE THE HOSTILITIES NEAR THE BORDER.
EVEN THE KING CAN'T STEM THE RAVAGES OF OLD AGE.
WOULD YOU LIKE MEDICATION?
CLATTER

I'VE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF YOUR FEELINGS FOR MY DAUGHTER.
I'VE ORDERED THE POISONING OF IMPORTANT PEOPLE.
EVER SINCE THE DAY I BOUGHT YOU, I'VE HAD TO MAKE TERRIBLE DECISIONS.
I REFUSED TO TAKE MEDICINE FROM ANY HEALER.
I COULDN'T TRUST ANYONE.
I MUST KEEP MAKING CRUEL DECISIONS.
PRIMULA WILL CHOOSE HER NEXT HUSBAND DURING THE CELEBRATION BALL TOMORROW NIGHT.
I'M PREPARED TO FACE MY FATE.
WHETHER YOU STRANGLE ME OR POISON ME, IT'S UP TO YOU.
YOU WERE INTERRUPTED ONCE, BUT NOW YOU HAVE THE CHANCE TO KILL ME.

I'VE DEDICATED MY LIFE TO SAVING PEOPLE.
THIS IS MEDICATION FOR YOUR HEART, CREATED FROM FOXGLOVES, WHICH ARE KNOWN TO BE TOXIC. I PREPARED IT MYSELF.
YOUR MAJESTY CAN CHOOSE NOT TO TAKE THE DRUG.
I'M SORRY TO HAVE RUSHED MATTERS WITHOUT CONSULTING YOU.
SLAM
NOW I KNOW WHY YOU WERE ACTING DISTANT.

SO THAT'S WHAT THEY THINK...
I'M AFRAID YOUR EMOTIONS WILL OVERWHELM YOU AND CAUSE A TRAGEDY.
I UNDERSTAND. I CONSIDER LADY PRIMULA TO BE LIKE A SISTER TO ME.
YOU ARE LADY PRIMULA'S MOST LOYAL SERVANT. HOWEVER, AS A BASILISK, YOU CANNOT BE ANYTHING MORE FOR HER.
WHY WOULD I DESIRE THE IMPOSSIBLE?
I KNOW THE LIMITATIONS OF MY POSITION MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE.
I CANNOT BECOME INVOLVED PAST A CERTAIN POINT, REGARDLESS OF MY FEELINGS...
...AS IT CAN RESULT IN SOMEONE'S DEATH!
WHAT IF WE GET CAUGHT?
C'MON. I WANNA GET A BETTER LOOK!
I SEE THE SILVER APOTHECARY IN HIS ROYAL UNIFORM!
WHERE?! LEMME SEE!
SLIP

ARRANGED MARRIAGE?
I KNEW IT.
THE PRINCE OF IBRAIM IS 20 YEARS OLDER THAN LADY PRIMULA. UGH.
He's known for being a playboy in this country...
I JUST SAW PRINCE GORIEL FROM KENT. HE LOOKS LIKE A SPOILED BRAT!
THUD
IT'S MORE IMPORTANT TO FORGE ALLIANCES. THAT MEANS LADY PRIMULA CANNOT CHOOSE BASED ON HER PREFERENCES ALONE.
Over here!
Owwww
ARGENT, HOW'S MY FATHER?
SLAM
IT'S MY FAULT! IT'S BECAUSE I WAS BEING SELFISH! PLEASE! DON'T LET HIM DIE!
I WAS SO SCARED!
HE'LL RECOVER.

PLATINUM HAIR... THAT MUST BE THE SILVER APOTHECARY.
I MAY BE SKILLED, BUT I CAN'T STOP THE AGING PROCESS.
YOU MUST DO WHAT'S BEST FOR THE COUNTRY, JUST LIKE I SERVE THE PEOPLE TO DO MY PART FOR THE SAME.
YOU SAID YOU WILL NOT RUN FROM YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES.
ARE THEY IN LOVE?
LISTEN TO ME, LADY PRIMULA.
HE MAY RECOVER FOR NOW, BUT ONE DAY, HE'S NOT GOING TO. WE ALL GET OLD AND DIE.

I JUST WANTED THINGS TO STAY THE SAME FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER...
"WEALTH AND POWER CAN LIMIT YOUR OPTIONS!"
A PRINCESS ISN'T ALWAYS GUARANTEED TO FALL IN LOVE AND LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER WITH A HANDSOME PRINCE.
THAT'S LADY PRIMULA'S FATE.

WHAT?!
CHATTER
LET'S WRECK THE BALL!
YEAH, IT'S A BAD SITUATION.
I FEEL BAD FOR THE PRINCESS.
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE.
LADY PRIMULA, YOU MUST START PREPARING FOR YOUR EVENT.

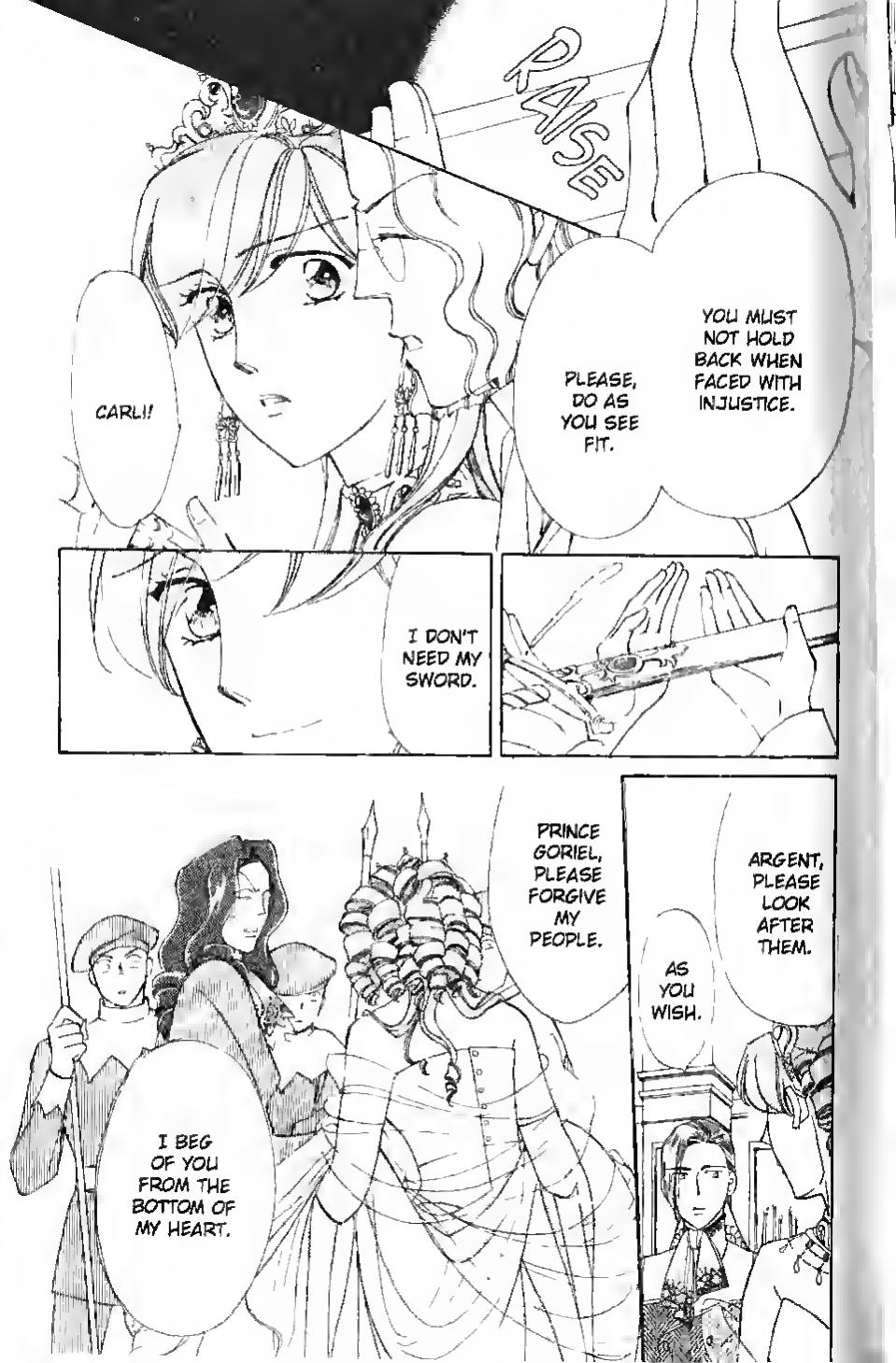
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR 17TH BIRTHDAY.
YOU ARE VERY BEAUTIFUL, MY LADY.
UNLIKE THE RUMORS, SHE'S A YOUTHFUL, ADORABLE YOUNG LADY.
WELCOME TO LADY PRIMULA'S DEBUTANTE BALL. WE'RE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR PRESENCE.
THE KING HAS FALLEN ILL AND CANNOT ATTEND TONIGHT. HE SENDS HIS APOLOGIES.
I'M GLAD THE KING'S NOT IN ATTENDANCE.
THAT MEANS WE CAN APPROACH THE PRINCESS WITHOUT HESITATION.
TOYA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I THOUGHT I'D CRASH ONE OF THESE CHANDELIERS DOWN BELOW.
WHAT? YOU'RE GOING TO GET HURT!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS KID?
HE'S GOT NO LIMITS!
LEAP
I KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME.
I JUST WANTED TO KNOW HOW ARGENT FELT...
W... WAIT, YOU IDIOT!
YOU'RE ACTUALLY DRESSED FOR THIS OCCASION!
YOU COULDN'T EVEN APPROACH THE MAN OF YOUR DREAMS!
WHY DON'T YOU TRY AND STOP ME?

CRASSSH
CRACK
I'M PRINCE GORIEL FROM KENT. I'M HONORED TO MEET YOU.
DAMN, MY PLANS GOT MASSIVELY SCREWED...
PEOPLE ARE LEERING AT ME!
I'M SCARED!
PLEASE
I JUST HAFTA GO FOR IT!
POUNCE

!
I JUST WANTED TO SEE THE PRINCESS! I...
I...
WHERE DID THIS BRAT COME FROM?!
TUG
Yes, my Lord!
TAP TAP TAP
EXECUTE THIS PEASANT IMMEDIATELY!
WHAT... INSOLENCE!!
TOYA!
TRUNK
LIBELLA, I'M SORRY TO GET YOU INTO THIS MESS.
A YOUNG GIRL?!

I ALSO WANTED TO SEE THE PRINCESS BEFORE I DIED. WHEN I FOUND OUT ABOUT HER ARRANGED MARRIAGE, I FELT SORRY FOR HER...
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO JUMP OFF!
ALL THE HEALERS HAVE GIVEN UP ON ME, AND I'M HERE TO SEE THE SILVER APOTHECARY.
THE TRUTH IS, I'M DYING FROM ILLNESS.
...
LADY PRIMULA, PLEASE SAVE TOYA!
HOW DARE YOU???!
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT PRINCESS OF STEEL HAD A HEART OF ICE!
I NEED TO CONTROL MYSELF...
I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE DYING. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET AWAY WITH THIS!


RAISE
CARL!!
PLEASE, DO AS YOU SEE FIT.
YOU MUST NOT HOLD BACK WHEN FACED WITH INJUSTICE.
I DON'T NEED MY SWORD.
PRINCE GORIEL, PLEASE FORGIVE MY PEOPLE.
I BEG OF YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART.
ARGENT, PLEASE LOOK AFTER THEM.
AS YOU WISH.

ROYAL APOTH-ECARY ...
HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE INJURED. HOW ABOUT YOU?
WHAT? ROYALTY MUST SHOW THE DAMN PEASANTS THEIR PLACE!
IN FACT, IT WAS YOUR DUTY TO EXECUTE THEM YOURSELF!
LADY PRIMULA...
I BELIEVE THAT THE KING'S ROLE IS TO LET HIS PEOPLE PROSPER.
I WILL DO WHAT I CAN TO APPEASE YOUR ANGER.
I DON'T WANT YOUR LAND OR MONEY!
SWEEP
FOR BRINGING SHAME UPON ME AND MY COUNTRY, YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY A HEFTY PRICE.
IF YOU WANT TO SPARE THOSE COMMONERS, THEN YOU MUST STRIP NAKED IN FRONT OF YOUR AUDIENCE, RIGHT HERE!
CHOOSE BETWEEN YOUR PRIDE OR THE LIVES OF YOUR PEASANTS! YOUR REFUSAL TO CHOOSE WILL RUIN ALL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH MY COUNTRY!

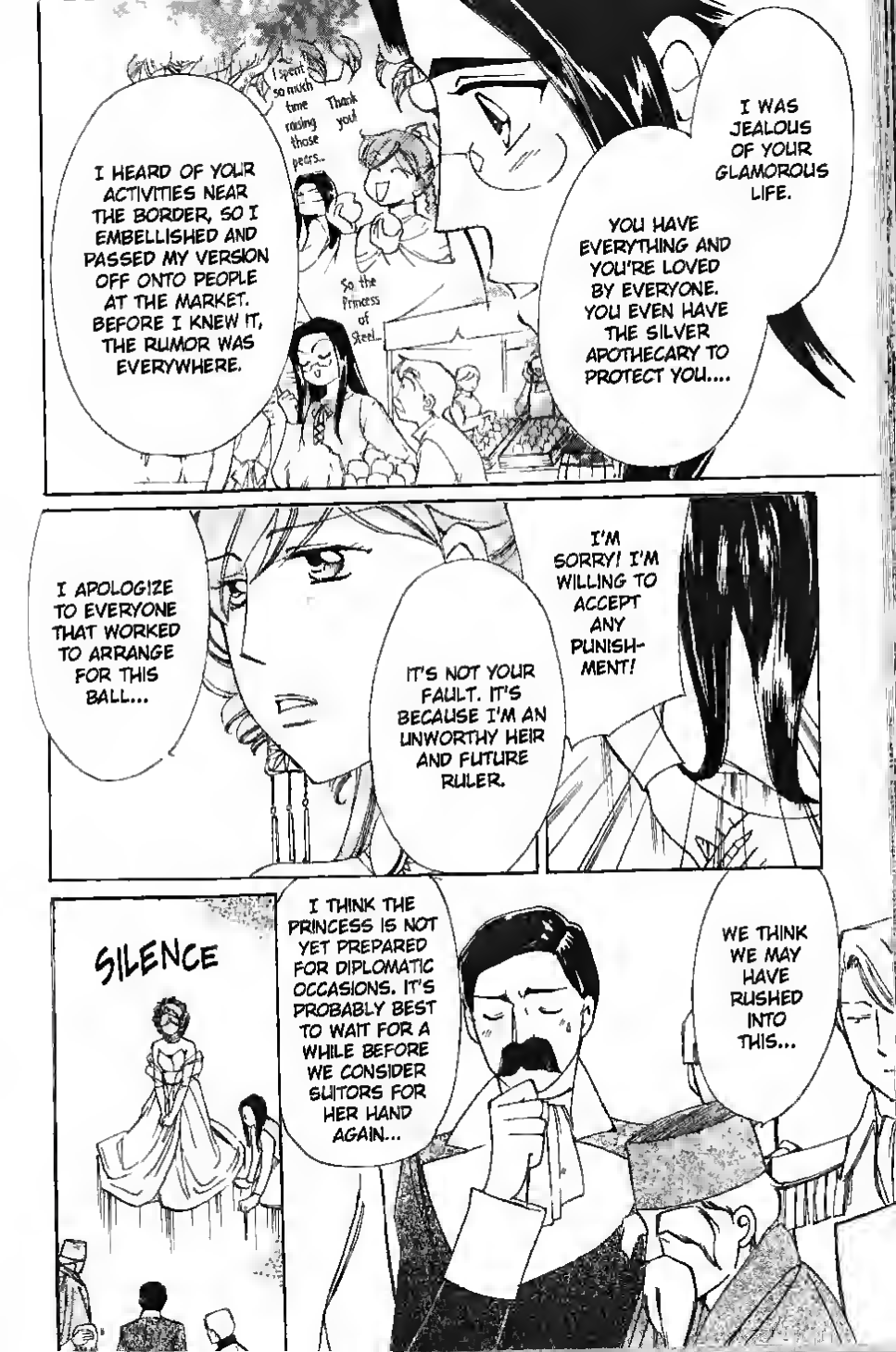
YOU--!!
AFTER ALL, I HEARD THAT YOU PREFER TO BE NAKED.
WAIT, LADY PRIMULA! THAT RUMOR-
PRINCESS, YOU CANNOT!
WHAT IF YOU TRANSMIT YOUR ILLNESS TO THE PRINCES!
I UNDER-STAND.
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT...

WHISPER
THE SILVER APOTH-ECARY?
WHISPER
TRANSMIT WHAT?
WHISPER
YOU'RE LYING!
CLIK
CLIK
FLUTTER
EXCUSE ME, LADY PRIMU-LA.
I HAVE TRIED TO ADVISE AGAINST THIS BALL, BUT LADY PRIMULA INSISTED ON ATTENDING.
THE KING AND THE PRINCESS ARE BOTH ILL FROM CHICKEN POX.

OH NO! IF A MATURE MAN IS INFECTED WITH CHICKEN POX, HE'LL BECOME IMPOTENT!
He's wrong
PLEASE WITNESS HER RASH.
PLEASE GET BETTER SOON, LADY PRIMULA!
WE REALLY MUST GET GOING.
EMPTY
HUH? THIS IS A SIMPLE BURN. WHEN DID YOU GET THIS?
I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO ENVELOPE ME IN SMOKE OR SOMETHING!
I CAN'T DO THAT HERE! YOU SHOULD THINK OF YOUR LOCATION.
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO WHAT YOU DID!
POKE POKE
WAIT!
Master you didn't!

I WOULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING TO PREVENT THOSE BASTARDS FROM SEEING YOU NAKED!
ARGENT, REALLY?
Oh!
EXCUSE ME.
WHAT?
I WOULD HAVE DONE ANYTHING TO PREVENT LADY PRIMULA FROM BEING DISGRACED IN FRONT OF THOSE FOOLS!
I WOULD HAVE DONE THE SAME.
FORGIVE ME.
I COULD NOT CONTROL MY EMOTIONS AND I MADE A MISTAKE.
...

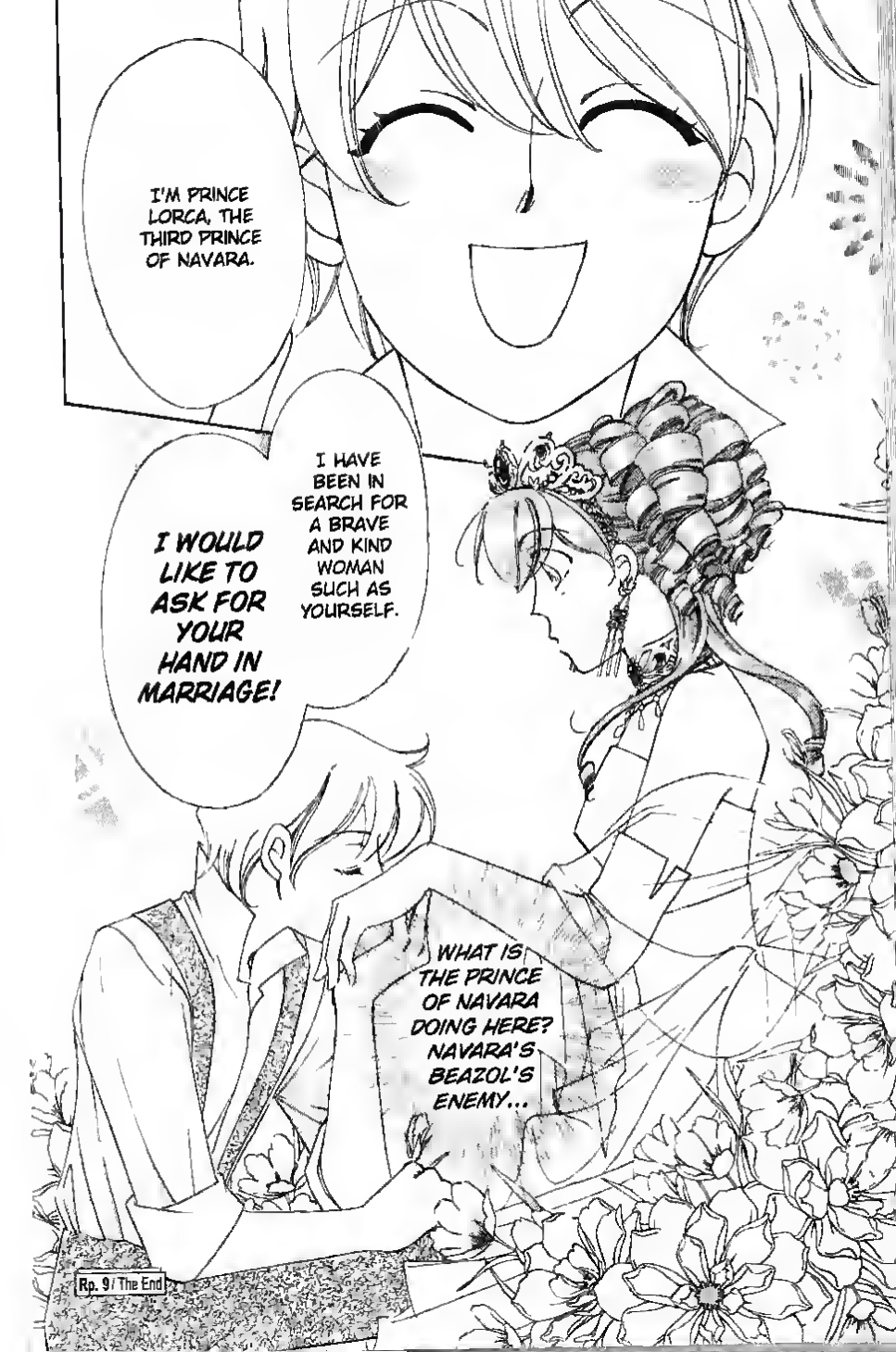
I KEEP FORGETTING YOU'RE A MAN, CARL!
ARGENT, I MAY HAVE BEEN JEALOUS OF YOU.
WHAT?
UHM... HAVE WE MET BEFORE?
FORGIVE ME! I STARTED RUMORS ABOUT YOU!
I'M SORRY TO RUIN YOUR IMPORTANT BALL!
I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE BOTH ALL RIGHT.
OH NO!!
AFTERWARDS, YOU COMPLAINED OF STOMACH CRAMPS.
YES, YOU CHOMPED THROUGH MY PEAR ORCHARD LIKE A PEST DURING YOUR VISIT.


I WAS JEALOUS OF YOUR GLAMOROUS LIFE.
YOU HAVE EVERYTHING AND YOU'RE LOVED BY EVERYONE. YOU EVEN HAVE THE SILVER APOTHECARY TO PROTECT YOU....
I HEARD OF YOUR ACTIVITIES NEAR THE BORDER, SO I EMBELLISHED AND PASSED MY VERSION OFF ONTO PEOPLE AT THE MARKET. BEFORE I KNEW IT, THE RUMOR WAS EVERYWHERE.
I spent so much time raising those pears...
Thank you!
So the Princess of Steel...
I'M SORRY! I'M WILLING TO ACCEPT ANY PUNISH-MENT!
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT. IT'S BECAUSE I'M AN UNWORTHY HEIR AND FUTURE RULER.
I APOLOGIZE TO EVERYONE THAT WORKED TO ARRANGE FOR THIS BALL...
SILENCE
I THINK THE PRINCESS IS NOT YET PREPARED FOR DIPLOMATIC OCCASIONS. IT'S PROBABLY BEST TO WAIT FOR A WHILE BEFORE WE CONSIDER SUITORS FOR HER HAND AGAIN...
WE THINK WE MAY HAVE RUSHED INTO THIS...

OH, PLEASE! THIS WAS JUST A SINGLE MISTAKE.
"WEALTH AND POWER CAN LIMIT YOUR OPTIONS!"
THE PRINCESS ISN'T ALLOWED TO CHOOSE HER LOVER...
MY LADY ...
WHAT HAPPENED TODAY WASN'T LADY PRIMULA'S FAULT!
I'M THE SAME AGE AS THE PRINCESS. WE'RE STILL DREAMY, YOUNG, 17 YEAR OLD GIRLS!
I'M A PEASANT. I WON'T PLAY ANY MAJOR ROLES IN THIS COUNTRY'S HISTORY...
THE LEAST I COULD DO IS TO UNDO THE DAMAGE I'VE CAUSED.
I'LL TELL PEOPLE THAT THE PRINCESS IS A WARM-HEARTED WOMAN WITH DETERMINATION OF STEEL!
PLEASE, NO MORE RUMORS!
It'll only make things worse...

SHE REALLY IS JUST A YOUNG GIRL...
I was kidding
I'm so sorry
That's no way to speak to my Lady!
Oh!
NOW YOU'RE BEING RUDE!
I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND A PRINCE THAT DOESN'T MIND YOUR APPETITE OR TABLE MANNERS!
YAK
YAK
YAK
HAHAHA! BEAZOL GIRLS ARE FUNNY!
TOYA, YOU'VE REGAINED CONSCIOUS-NESS!
THAT WAS A LIE! I'M HERE BECAUSE I NEVER RECEIVED AN INVITATION.
BACK OFF! KNOW YOUR PLACE!
YOU CAUSED THIS ENTIRE COMMOTION! KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT!
CAN I PROPOSE TO YOU?

YOU SHOULD WATCH WHAT YOU SAY!
LADY PRIMULA. I'M SORRY TO BARGE IN WITHOUT A PROPER INVITATION.
WHEN I HEARD ABOUT YOU, I HAD TO SEE YOU WITH MY OWN EYES, AND TRAVELED ACROSS THE BORDER TO DO SO.
YOU'RE LATE, INFREE!
THAT COAT-OF-ARMS BELONGS TO...?!
I WAS PROCURING OUR GIFT.


I'M PRINCE LORCA, THE THIRD PRINCE OF NAVARA.
I HAVE BEEN IN SEARCH FOR A BRAVE AND KIND WOMAN SUCH AS YOURSELF.
I WOULD LIKE TO ASK FOR YOUR HAND IN MARRIAGE!
WHAT IS THE PRINCE OF NAVARA DOING HERE? NAVARA'S BEAZOL'S ENEMY...

Apothecarius Argentum

Recipe 10 The Insect-loving Prince

I TEND THE FAMILY'S PEAR ORCHARD AND DELIVER PEARS TO THE MARKET. MY FATE WAS TO LIVE A SIMPLE LIFE THAT WOULD BE FORGOTTEN IN TIME...
MY NAME IS UBELLA.
I'M JUST A PEASANT FROM THE SMALL COUNTRY OF BEAZOL.
ON MY WAY BACK FROM THE MARKET, I GAVE STRANDED MERCHANTS A RIDE TO THE VILLAGE NEAR THE CASTLE.
WE ENDED UP CRASHING THE PRINCESS' DEBUTANTE BALL...
AS A RESULT, I'M WITNESSING A HISTORICAL MOMENT.
LADY PRIMULA. I'M SORRY TO BARGE IN WITHOUT A PROPER INVITATION.
WHEN I HEARD ABOUT YOU, I HAD TO SEE YOU WITH MY OWN EYES, AND TRAVELED ACROSS THE BORDER TO DO SO.

TOYA?
I'M PRINCE LORCA...
THE THIRD PRINCE OF NAVARA.
TOYA WAS THE PRINCE OF NAVARA. OUR COUNTRIES HAD RECENTLY EXCHANGED HOSTILITIES ALONG THE BORDER!
I HAVE BEEN IN SEARCH FOR A BRAVE AND KIND WOMAN SUCH AS YOURSELF.
I WOULD LIKE TO ASK FOR YOUR HAND IN MARRIAGE!
IT'S TOO SUDDEN...
STOP JOKING AROUND!
CONFESS YOUR TRUE INTENTIONS!
INFREE, PRESENT OUR GIFT TO THE PRINCESS!

THUD
rattle
COULD IT BE A BOMB?
MAYBE SOLDIERS ARE HIDING INSIDE THIS CRATE?
bash
bash
bash
BASH
GAAAHHH!
FLOP
FLOP
FLOP
WE HEARD IT WAS LADY PRIMULA'S FAVORITE.
FRESH SHRIMP?
HAPPY 17TH BIRTHDAY, MY LADY!

100
THE DEBUTANTE BALL WAS... CANCELLED?
IF YOU'RE NOT FEELING WELL, WE CAN CONTINUE LATER.
ARGON, PLEASE CONTINUE.
INTRUDERS EMBARRASSED THE PRINCE OF KENT...
WHO WAS ONE OF THE PRINCES CHOSEN TO BE HER SUITOR. AS A RESULT, DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES WERE ENDANGERED.
HOWEVER, ARGENT QUICKLY SAVED THE DAY AND THE PRINCES LEFT THE BALL WITHOUT INCIDENT.
ONE OF THE INTRUDERS STARTED THE "PRINCESS OF STEEL" RUMOR.
THE OTHER INTRUDER ...
I'M PRINCE LORCA, THE THIRD PRINCE OF NAVARA!
WE'VE CONFIRMED HIS IDENTITY THROUGH HIS BELONGINGS.

I'M NOT DEAD YET! I ALSO DON'T HAVE CHICKEN POX!!
RIGHT! I'M HERE TO GIVE MY CONDOLENCES FOR YOUR PASSING FROM THE CHICKEN POX...
PRINCE LORCA, PSSST!
YOUR MAJESTY. I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU IN GOOD HEALTH-
WHISPER
ACTUALLY, ARGENT...
"YOUR ILLNESS" NOT "YOUR PASSING."
WHAT A DUMB PRINCE!
FINE. YOU'RE THE THIRD PRINCE? DID THE KING SEND YOU AS SOME KIND OF PAYMENT?
NO, I CAME ON MY OWN WILL.
THIS IS MY ATTENDANT AND BODYGUARD, INFREE.
YOUR MAJESTY, I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH YOUR STRONG, KIND AND BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER!
I WOULD LIKE TO ASK FOR HER HAND IN MARRIAGE!

HE'S STILL A NAIVE KID...
OH BOY.
I'M TWO YEARS YOUNGER THAN LADY PRIMULA.
I THINK THIS WILL BE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO BRING PEACE TO BOTH OUR COUNTRIES!
I HEARD WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY.
HOWEVER, MARRIAGE IS NOT A MATTER THAN CAN BE DECIDED ON IMPULSE.
THIS ISSUE IS DELICATE, ESPECIALLY IF YOU CAME ON YOUR OWN WILL...
I'LL SEND A MESSENGER TO NAVARA.
MEANWHILE, I'D LIKE YOU TO GET SOME REST HERE, AS MY GUEST.
I WANT EVERYONE AT THE CASTLE TO TREAT HIM AS A ROYAL GUEST!
REALLY? THANK YOU!!

HUG
THE KING OF BEAZOL IS THE KING OF KINGS, JUST LIKE I HEARD!
And...
LIBELLA DIDN'T MEAN TO DO HARM. PLEASE FORGIVE HER! I BEG OF YOU!!
YES, YES. I WILL.
CARLI, TAKE CARE OF OUR GUESTS.
YES, YOUR MAJESTY.
RUB RUB RUB
ARGENT, I NEED TO TALK TO YOU.
You said I... ...hed the chicken pox?
.....
MY LADY, YOU SHOULD GET CHANGED.
I'LL HAVE YOUR QUARTERS PREPARED. PRINCE LORCA, PLEASE WAIT HERE.
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU WERE A PRINCE, LORCA! I'M SORRY TO BE SO RUDE...
I DON'T MIND, LIBELLA!
THANKS FOR THE RIDE! YOU SHOULD BE HEADING HOME.

INFREE, PLEASE SHOW HER OUT.
ARE YOU SURE?
NO SPREADING ANY MORE RUMORS, ESPECIALLY ABOUT THIS CURRENT SITUATION!
HERE'S YOUR REWARD. PLEASE, KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT!
CLINK
TAKE CARE, UBELLA!
WHAT? MY JOB HERE IS DONE ALREADY?
Let's get going.
SHE HAD TO RETURN HOME.
Be careful.
I SEE...
I wanted to chat with her...
They're finally gone!
THANK YOU FOR WAITING, PRINCE LORCA.
OH, WHERE'S UBELLA?
WHAT DO YOU SAY, PRINCESS?
WE SHOULD EAT THE SHRIMPS BEFORE THEY ROT.

YOU THINK MY GIFT IS POISONED?
THAT'S KIND OF RUDE...
PLEASE WAIT UNTIL ARGENT RETURNS.
WHAT IF THEY'RE POISONED?
SHRIMP ...
NO! THEY'RE FROM OUR ENEMY!
I'LL PROVE THAT THEY'RE NOT!
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
YUMMY! RAW SHRIMP IS THE BEST!
HERE YOU GO, MY LADY!
PLEASE, YOUR BEHAVIOR MUST REMAIN WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF YOUR POSITION.
EXCUSE ME.
CLICK
THAT WAS A LONG LECTURE.
.....

ONE TROUBLE AFTER ANOTHER ...
OR SHOULD I SAY ONE CHALLENGER AFTER ANOTHER?
DON'T WORRY, MASTER!
THE PRINCE IS A KID AND A DUMB ONE AT THAT!
NEITHER THE KING NOR THE PRINCESS WAS TAKING HIS PROPOSAL SERIOUSLY. DON'T WORRY!
I WAS STARVING!
THAT DRESS WAS SO BINDING!
YOU WERE VERY BEAUTIFUL!
They're eating a
YOU LET HER EAT THE SHRIMP BEFORE I TASTED THEM?
THE PRINCE ATE THEM TO PROVE THAT THEY WEREN'T POISONED.
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO SHARE YOUR QUARTERS WITH YOUR ATTENDANT?

PLEASE CALL ME IF YOU NEED ANYTHING.
GIGGLE
He's still a boy!
I'M SCARED TO SLEEP BY MYSELF.
SMACK
THAT PRIMULA IS MORE INTERESTED IN EATING THAN BEING FEMININE!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
THE PALACE IS GOING TO FIND OUT ABOUT THIS, YOU KNOW.
fluff fluff
THAT OLD FOOL!
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE TURNED ME DOWN AS HIS SON-IN-LAW!
EVEN IF THEY DID, THEY WOULDN'T CARE.
NONE OF 'EM GIVES A DAMN ABOUT ME.

DON'T YOU THINK...
...THIS IS THE PERFECT CHANCE? THE KING'S ILL.
I'VE COME HERE TO MAKE THIS COUNTRY MINE AND TAKE THE PRINCESS AS MY BRIDE!
THAT WAS MY REASON FOR TRAVELING TO BEAZOL!
KTZ
ARGENT, WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'VE BEEN HERE FOR TWO DAYS IN A ROW.

FULL PLATE
GOOD MORNING, ROYAL APOTHECARY!
I'LL BE HERE TO ATTEND TO HIS MAJESTY'S HEALTH.
Pride as Former Food Taster
CRUMBLE
PRINCESS, I KNOW YOU ENJOY SHRIMP. HOWEVER, GORGING ON IT FOR BREAKFAST...
HE'S ALSO WORRIED ABOUT THE PRINCESS...
ARGENT'S RIGHT! IT'S UNLADYLIKE IN FRONT OF THE PRINCE!
I LOVE THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE A GOOD APPETITE!
LADY PRIMULA, I DON'T MIND!
CLIK
IT WAS REALLY DELICIOUS!
AW, LORCA!
WE NEED TO EAT A HEALTHY AMOUNT OF FOOD.
WE DON'T WANT TO BECOME *PREMATURELY GRAY* OR *MESS UP OUR EYESIGHT* DUE TO OLD AGE!

REALLY?
SHE'S NOT ONLY STRONG AND CUTE, BUT SHE CAN COOK?
SHE'S BEEN SO KIND TO COOK FOR US!
RIGHT, ARGENT?
LADY PRIMULA HAS BEEN LEARNING HOW TO COOK.
I'D LOVE TO HAVE MY LADY COOK FOR ME!
SHUDDER
? ?
THIS LOOKS GREAT!
Thank you!
NOBODY HAS BEEN ABLE TO FINISH A SERVING!
GOD, THAT LOOKS AWFUL AS USUAL!
THUD
WHAT IS THAT?
I'M STILL LEARNING ...

HE'S EATING!
SECONDS, PLEASE!
Really?
EMPTY
HE'S ASKING FOR SECONDS!
ONLY ARGENT COULD EVEN MANAGE TO SWALLOW HER FOOD...
WE WERE TRYING TO KEEP PESTS AWAY FROM PRIMULA, BUT...
...I WAS NEVER EXPECTING THAT KIND OF PEST TO WANDER IN...
THE FIRST PRINCE OF NAVARA IS MARRIED WITH A SON. THERE'S NO POSSIBILITY OF THE THIRD PRINCE ASCENDING TO THE THRONE.
THE ROYAL FAMILY HAS DECIDED HE'S EXPENDABLE. AS A RESULT, HE'S NEVER MADE A PUBLIC APPEARANCE.
THERE'S THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE WAS SENT BECAUSE HE'S EXPENDABLE.
I KNOW THERE'S A CEASE-FIRE, BUT TO SEND A PRINCE WITH A SINGLE BODYGUARD ...?
THEY MIGHT AS WELL HAND HIM OVER AS HOSTAGE AT THAT POINT.

THE MISSING GOODS ARE-
...GOODS WERE STOLEN FROM THE SEVSEN MARKET.
THIS MAY NOT BE RELATED TO THIS INCIDENT, BUT...
SO HE DID COME HERE TO SEE THE PRINCESS.
WHETHER HE'S JUST STRANGE OR HE'S HERE FOR SOMETHING ELSE... WE'LL SEE.
HMMM...
THAT WAS DELICIOUS!
SLAM
IT WAS SO GOOD, I KINDA TORE THROUGH THE MEAL!
I'M SORRY TO DISPLAY RUDE TABLE MANNERS IN FRONT OF THE ETIQUETTE INSTRUCTOR!
clatter
Please feel free to give me pointers!
UH, UM...
.....

I THINK THE APOTHECARY AND LADY PRIMULA ARE IN LUUURVE.
The food looked nasty—
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, PRINCE?
YOU KNOW I CAN EAT ANYTHING.
YES?
ARGENT, OVER HERE.
CLICK
EXCUSE ME, MY LADY.
WHAT?
YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS.
JUMP
WHAT'S WITH YOUR REACTION? THE BURN YOU CAUSED RUBS AGAINST MY CLOTHES AND HURTS!
THE LEAST YOU COULD DO IS TREAT IT FOR ME!

IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN BRAND ME LIKE CATTLE!
WHAT IF THIS SCARS?
I HAD NO-
WHAT?
NOTHING.
SO ...
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT LORCA?
I'm done!
HE SEEMS NICE.
I'M ONLY THE ROYAL APOTHECARY. I DON'T PLAN ON INTERFERING BETWEEN YOU AND SUITABLE SUITORS.
OH, I SEE!
WHAT ABOUT YOU, PRINCESS?

I THINK HE'S SWEET. WE GET ALONG.
KINDA LIKE HAVING A COOL KID BROTHER!
GLARE
SUMP
CLATTER
CLATTER CLATTER CLATTER
I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO HAVE BEEN NEAR THE SILVER APOTHECARY FOR A BIT LONGER...
DAMMIT, LORCA!
CLOP CLOP
CLOP
I WAS GOING TO TELL THE PRINCESS NOT TO TRUST LORCA TOO MUCH...
I THOUGHT MY LIFE WOULD BE BORING, BUT YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT COULD HAPPEN...
CLOP CLOP
CLOP CLOP CLOP
WHINNY

YOUNG LADY, COME WITH ME.
I THOUGHT MY BIG ADVEN-TURE WAS OVER ALREADY?
WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING TO MY LIFE?
ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE FLOWERS TO YOUR SICK FATHER?
THAT'S RIGHT.
OKAY, I WANT TO ADD SOME-THING!
THIS IS DICRANOR-RHINA MICANS. IT'S LIKE AN EMERALD, HUH. ISN'T IT PRETTY?
IT IS!

HE'S MADE HIMSELF QUITE AT HOME.
MY FATHER WOULD LIKE THAT.
I CAN'T BELIEVE HIS MAJESTY'S ALLOWING AN ENEMY PRINCE TO STAY HERE AS HIS ROYAL GUEST.
I'M SURE HE'S GOT A VERY GOOD REASON.
I WAS WARY AT FIRST, BUT MY RESERVATIONS ARE STARTING TO FADE.
AFTER ALL, MARRIAGE CAN TURN YESTERDAY'S ENEMIES INTO TOMORROW'S ALLIES.
BEAZOL AND NAVARA USED TO BE A SINGLE COUNTRY. THEY WORSHIPPED THE LAND AND SKY AND WERE BOTH BLESSED WITH FERTILE LAND.
NAVARA STAKED OUT THEIR INDEPENDENCE AFTER ADOPTING NEW TECHNOLOGY AND INDUSTRY.
JOINING FORCES WITH NAVARA IS A VALID STRATEGY, CONSIDERING THE EMPIRE FORMING SOUTH OF BEAZOL.
Beazol
Navara
THE PRINCE IS SO CHARMING AND FRIENDLY.
HE MIGHT BE A GOOD MATCH FOR LADY PRIMULA.
PRINCE LORCA'S ALSO POPULAR AMONG THE SERVANTS.

THERE ARE BUGS THAT SPEND YEARS LIVING IN THE SOIL...
...ONLY TO EMERGE FOR A FEW DAYS OR FEW WEEKS THEN DIE...
BUTTERFLIES AND BEES POLLINATE CROPS, AND SOIL-DWELLING INSECTS CAN HELP AERATE THE SOIL.
MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE BUGS ARE DISGUSTING CREATURES THAT DESTROY CROPS, BUT THEY HAVE AN IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE WORLD, TOO.
THEY MAY BE SMALL, BUT THEY ALSO HAVE A LIFE TO LIVE.
THEY MATE WITHIN THAT SHORT TIME AND CREATE ANOTHER GENERATION TO REPEAT THE CYCLE.
I USED TO KNOW A BOY THAT WAS QUITE THE BOTANIST.
GUYS LIKE TALKING ABOUT THAT KINDA STUFF.
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

"PRIMULA IS THE LATIN NAME OF..."
"...MY MOTHER'S FAVORITE FLOWER. HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A PRIM-ROSE?"
THE FLOWER WAS NAMED PRIMULA BECAUSE IT IS ONE OF THE FIRST FLOWERS TO BLOOM IN SPRING. SPECIFIC VARIETIES ARE SEDATIVES AND SOME HAVE ANTIDOTAL PROPERTIES."
YET, HE WOULD OPEN UP WHEN HE TALKED ABOUT FLOWERS.
UNLIKE YOU, HE WAS QUIET AND SULLEN. MAKING CONVERSATION WAS HARD AT BEST...
WE USED TO DINE TOGETHER.
What?
BOYS SHOULD LIKE BUGS!!
FLOWERS? THAT'S WIMPY!
IT DOESN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO ME.
PEOPLE WITH THE ABILITY TO LOVE DELICATE LIFE FORMS HAVE KIND HEARTS.
IN FACT, I STILL LIKE MY OLD FRIEND.

THAT'S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT YOU!
"YOU ARE NOT TO TOUCH THE PRINCESS."
"IF YOU DO, YOU WILL BE EXECUTED IMMEDIATELY."
"HE'S... A LOWLY SLAVE. HE'S ALSO BEEN AFFLICTED WITH THE 'GRIM REAPER'S CURSE'."
"IF YOU TOUCH HIM, YOU'LL GET HURT."
ARGENT MUST HATE THIS SITUATION ...
EVEN IF HE'S IN LOVE WITH THE PRINCESS, HE CAN'T EVER TOUCH HER WITH HIS POISONOUS BODY.
ONE DAY, I'LL REMOVE THE POISON FROM YOUR BODY!
JUST HANG ON, MASTER!

GOOD MORNING, ARGENT!
YOU'RE WELCOME. PLEASE STEP INSIDE.
THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO A TOUR OF YOUR SHOP!
ARGENT VOLUNTARILY INVITED GUESTS TO THE SHOP?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
THANK YOU.
PUTTER PUTTER PUTTER
HE'S LETTING PEOPLE INTO THE LAB! HE DOESN'T LET ANYBODY IN THERE!
Including the Princess!
Looks gross
I HEAR THAT YOU CAN CURE ANY DISEASE. IS THAT TRUE?
NO, SOME SITUA-TIONS ARE OUT OF MY HANDS.
OH. I SEE...

I SUPPOSE I CAN'T DEPEND ON RUMORS...
TUG
OH WOW! YOU DO HAVE SILVER HAIR! I FIGURED YOU WERE OLD!
PRINCE LORCA, YOU HAVE DUST IN YOUR HAIR.
YANK YANK YANK
I HOPE HE'S NOT PLANNING TO POISON THE BRAT--
--OR POUR ACID ON HIM!!
MASTER'S GETTING MAD!
I'M SORRY, MY HANDS GOT TANGLED.
I shouldn't have seen that...?
UH, PRINCE ...
BE CAREFUL. THIS ROOM'S STOCKED WITH TOXIC CHEMICALS ...
POISONS? I'M SCARED, PRINCESS.
DON'T BE. POISON CAN BE MEDICINAL AND VICE-VERSA, DEPENDING ON THE DOSAGE.
TAKE WOLFBANE AND SNAKES. THEIR POISON IS USED TO HELP THEM SURVIVE AND DEFEND THEMSELVES.

THE IRIDESCENT WINGS OF THE JEWEL BEETLES DETER BIRDS, SO THAT'S ANOTHER DEFENSE MECHANISM.
POISON ISN'T THE ONLY FORM OF DEFENSE.
SOME CREATURES DEFEND THEMSELVES THROUGH CAMOUFLAGE AND MIMICRY.
IT'S ESPECIALLY COMMON IN INSECTS.
YOU'VE NEVER TALKED ABOUT BUGS BEFORE!
YOU CAN DERIVE MEDICINE FROM BUGS, NOT JUST PLANTS.
FOR EXAMPLE ...
OH, I SEE!
Argent you're so smart!
I'M GLAD THINGS AREN'T ESCALATING...
LET ME SHOW YOU THE NEXT ROOM.
THE POWDER CAN BE USED AS AN APHRODISIAC OR HAIR TONIC, BUT IN LARGE AMOUNTS, IT CAN BE LETHAL.
THE TOXIN OF EPICAUTA GORHAMI CAN CAUSE INFLAMMATIONS.

ARGENT'S A DAMN COWARD!
HE WATCHES MY EVERY MOVE AND HAS A REPLY FOR EVERYTHING I SAY!
I'LL SHOW HIM!
rustle
LADY PRIMULA, OVER HERE!
IT'S GOT A LOVELY GOLDEN COLOR!
PEOPLE TRIED TO EXTRACT GOLD FROM CERTAIN BEETLES OF THE PLUSIOTIS GENUS.
DO YOU KNOW WHY BUGS SEEK OUT FLOWERS?
WHY?

PEOPLE WANT TO TOUCH AND SURROUND THEMSELVES WITH BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS.
BUGS ARE THE SAME WAY.
LADY PRIMULA, PLEASE WAIT HERE.
HE'S FLYING AWAY!
WHAT? DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO ME? YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING ME LIKE A HAWK.
YOU CAN'T BE IN LOVE WITH ME... YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH THE PRINCESS.
THERE'S NO NEED TO HIDE.
I WAS WATCHING YOU BOTH BEFORE THE BALL.

ARE YOU TRYING TO BLAME ME FOR THAT?
WHAT MADE YOU CRASH THE BALL?
WERE YOU HOPING THAT SHE'D SWING HER SWORD AROUND AND SCARE OFF THE SUITORS?
IF YOU DID, LADY PRIMULA WOULDN'T HAVE NEEDED TO DEFEND YOU.
YOU COULD HAVE REVEALED YOUR IDENTITY IN FRONT OF THE PRINCE OF KENT.
WHAT IF YOU'RE RIGHT?
AIM FOR A SHOTGUN WEDDING, EVEN...
AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I WOULD DO.
IF YOU LOVE LADY PRIMULA, YOU SHOULD GO AFTER HER. I WOULDN'T WORRY THAT YOU'RE A COMMONER.
YOU'RE JUST LIKE LIBELLA. YOU HAVE A SHARP MIND, BUT YOU LACK THE COURAGE TO ACT ON IT.

SLAM
LORCA?
PRINCE?!
I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE! IF YOU EVER TRY TO HURT LADY PRIMULA, YOU'RE A DEAD MAN!
MASTER?
HURT ME? HE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.
I'M SORRY, ARGENT.
YOU'RE UPSET BECAUSE I KISSED THE PRINCESS.

FORGIVE ME, MY LADY.
I'M GOING HOME!
I'M NOT YOUR POSSES-SION, AND I DON'T NEED YOUR SUPERVI-SION OR GUIDANCE.
ARGENT, YOU'VE BEEN ACTING STRANGELY.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
JUST ONE MORE PUSH...
I JUST NEED TO BREAK THEM APART A BIT MORE...
I CAN'T!
I REFUSE TO TAKE PART IN SUCH A THING!
I'M ORDER-ING YOU!
I DON'T HAVE THE TIME.
YOU SHOULD RETURN HOME FOR NOW...
INFREE, COME CLOSER.

BACK THEN, YOU SAID...
...YOU WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR ME!
ARGENT THE ROYAL APOTH-ECARY, PRESENT FOR DUTY!
HOW'S PRINCE LORCA DOING?
HE'S HAD A FEVER SINCE LAST NIGHT.
IT MUST BE HARD, NOT BEING HOME. YOU MUST BE EXHAUSTED.
I WAS WONDERING IF I COULD SPEAK TO ARGENT ALONE?
I WANT TO APOLOGIZE FOR YESTERDAY. HAVE A MAN-TO-MAN TALK, YOU KNOW...
I UNDER-STAND. EXCUSE ME, ARGENT.

I DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD SEE ME ANYMORE.
I'M GLAD. I'VE WANTED TO TELL YOU SOMETHING.
YOU SAID THAT YOU LIED ABOUT YOUR ILLNESS DURING THE BALL, BUT YOU ARE SICK.
YOU HAVE A DISORDER WITH YOUR SENSE OF TASTE. I'VE SEEN YOUR SWOLLEN JOINTS AND ANALYZED YOUR HAIR SAMPLE. I'M SURE OF IT.
THAT'S WHY YOU'VE BEEN WATCHING ME...
YOU MAY BE THE THIRD PRINCE, BUT IT'S UNUSUAL THAT YOU HAVEN'T MADE ANY PUBLIC APPEARANCES.
I FIGURED THE REASON WAS DUE TO YOUR ILL HEALTH.
THE SILVER APOTHECARY HAS ME FIGURED OUT. UNFORTUNATELY...
...I CAN'T LET YOU HAVE LADY PRIMULA!

I TOOK ARGENT'S POTION... THEN...
IT'S THE POWDERED EPICAUTA FROM ARGENT'S STORE!
THIS IS....
SLAM
PRINCE LORCA!
CRASHHH!!
LORCA, WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?
LADY PRIMULA, EXECUTE ARGENT IMMEDIATELY AND CALL ANOTHER APOTHECARY!
HE'S TRYING TO POISON THE PRINCE!

WHY WOULD YOU POISON YOURSELF?
HOW COULD YOU ACCUSE HIM LIKE THAT?
YOU SAW HOW JEALOUSY DROVE ARGENT TO VIOLENCE YESTERDAY!
ARGENT WOULD NEVER POISON SOMEONE IN THIS MANNER.
HE'S PAINFULLY AWARE OF THE DANGER OF POISONS...
AFTER ALL, HE'S MY FORMER FOOD TASTER.
WE DINED TOGETHER, AND HE WAS THE SHIELD THAT PROTECTED MY LIFE. ATTEMPTS TO POISON ME ALMOST ENDED UP KILLING HIM ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

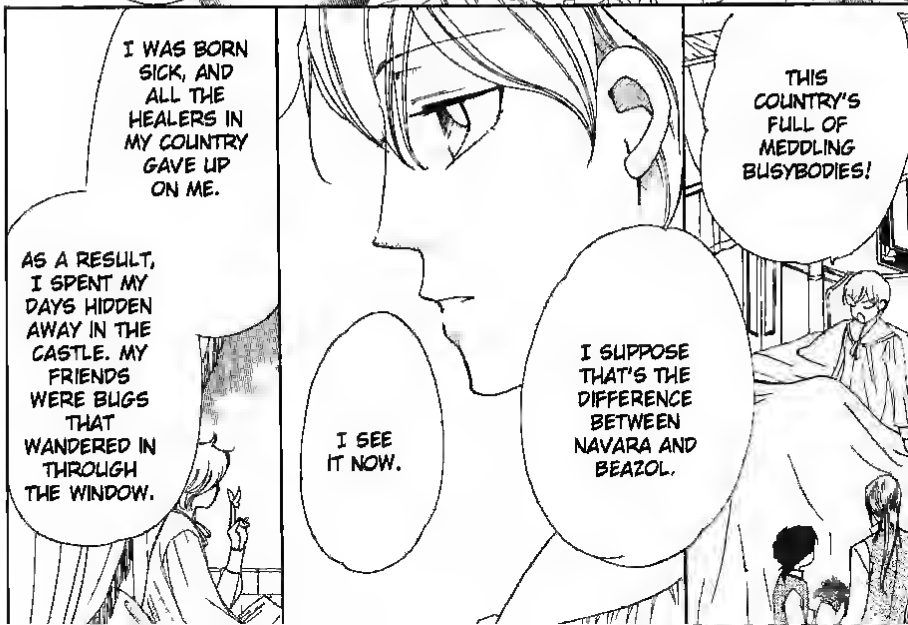
CLASS AND PHYSICAL DISTANCE CAN'T...
...BREAK THE BOND THAT WE HAVE.
WE HAVE A DEEP, STRONG BOND.
"I USED TO KNOW A BOY THAT WAS QUITE THE BOTANIST."
"WE USED TO DINE TOGETHER."
"UNLIKE YOU, HE WAS QUIET AND SULLEN. MAKING CONVERSATION WAS HARD AT BEST..."
I GET IT!
I SEE NOW...
FATHER? SHOULDN'T YOU BE RECOVERING IN BED?
I FIGURED YOU WOULD TRY TO EITHER POISON ARGENT OR ME INSTEAD.
THIS WAS MORE THAN I WAS EXPECTING FROM A DYING YOUNG MAN!
I'VE BEEN FINE FOR A WHILE NOW.
KTZ
KTZ

AFTER ALL, YOU STOLE A LARGE SHIPMENT OF SHRIMP FROM THE SEVSEN MARKET.
BY THE WAY, WHAT YOU HAVE THERE IS JUST AN ANESTHETIC.
WE PUT ON AN ACT SO YOU WOULD DROP YOUR GUARD.
I HAD HIM SELECT SOME POISONS AND PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO TEMPT YOU INTO STEALING THEM.
SO MY MASTER WASN'T GOING LOONY FROM JEALOUSY?
HE WAS JUST ACTING?
I WOULDN'T BE SO SURE...
LORCA, YOUR ILLNESS HAS BEEN PLAGUING YOUR ENTIRE COUNTRY.
THAT'S THE TRUE REASON NAVARA WANTS TO EXPAND ITS BORDERS!
I SENT SOMEONE TO INVESTIGATE.
HOW DID YOU...
CLICK

UBELLA!
ON MY WAY BACK HOME, THE KING SENT A KNIGHT AFTER ME TO DELIVER A MESSAGE.
I'M GOOD AT FINDING AND SPREADING INFORMATION, SO I WAS ASKED TO LOOK INTO NAVARA.
I FELT I WASN'T UP TO THE TASK, BUT...
...MY KING SENT HIS MOST TRUSTED KNIGHT TO HELP ME. I WANTED TO ASSIST MY COUNTRY!
JUST AS YOU USED ME TO GAIN DETAILS ABOUT BEAZOL, I WENT TO NAVARA TO GATHER INFORMATION FOR MY COUNTRY.
I NEVER IMAGINED NAVARA WAS IN SUCH A MESS!
I'M CARBEAU, LADY PRIMULA'S FENCING INSTRUCTOR!
OUR KING NEEDS YOUR HELP.
GLINT
WERE YOU ORDERED TO SEDUCE MY DAUGHTER AND TAKE OVER MY COUNTRY?!

INFREE!
THE THEFT FROM THE MARKET WAS MY DOING!
HE WANTED TO SACRIFICE HIMSELF TO HALT THE BLOODSHED BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES.
I SWEAR ON MY PRINCE'S HONOR THAT HE WASN'T UNDER ANYBODY'S ORDERS!
GO AHEAD! EXECUTE ME! I DON'T HAVE LONG TO LIVE, DAMMIT.
YOU HAD ME FIGURED OUT AND YOU WERE PLAYING ME.
THE KING OF BEAZOL IS A SHARP OL' BASTARD...
YOU'RE BOLD AND SMART. I'D RATHER NOT SEE THAT GO TO WASTE.
ARE YOU CRAZY? I WAS TRYING TO TRICK YOU!!
I CAN'T EXECUTE YOU. YOU'RE A CANDIDATE FOR MY DAUGHTER'S HAND.
YOU EVEN POISONED YOURSELF RATHER THAN POISON SOMEONE ELSE.
THAT'S RIGHT. YOU'VE ALSO GOT A KIND HEART.

BESIDES, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TREATED BY MY SILVER APOTHECARY.
THE FLOWERS ARE FROM LADY PRIMULA.
THE PEARS ARE FROM LIBELLA.


I WAS BORN SICK, AND ALL THE HEALERS IN MY COUNTRY GAVE UP ON ME.
AS A RESULT, I SPENT MY DAYS HIDDEN AWAY IN THE CASTLE. MY FRIENDS WERE BUGS THAT WANDERED IN THROUGH THE WINDOW.
I SEE IT NOW.
I SUPPOSE THAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NAVARA AND BEAZOL.
THIS COUNTRY'S FULL OF MEDDLING BUSYBODIES!

ONE DAY, A BIG PEST CAME FLYING IN.
THE PEST WAS A THIEF THAT WANDERED INTO MY ROOM. HE WAS ABOUT TO BE EXECUTED WHEN I BEGGED FOR HIS LIFE.
It's mush!
Payment for the shrimp!
THAT WAS INFREE, MY ONLY FRIEND IN THE ENTIRE WORLD.
EVENTUALLY, MY PEOPLE BECAME SICK AND BUGS DISAPPEARED FROM MY COUNTRY.
I DIDN'T WANT TO ROT AND DIE, SO I LEFT THE CASTLE WITH INFREE SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.
I WAS TRAVELING IN SEARCH FOR A CURE WHEN I HEARD ABOUT THE SILVER APOTHECARY AND THE PRINCESS OF STEEL.
WHEN I CAME TO BEAZOL, I COULD SEE THAT YOUR LAND WAS STILL VIBRANT.
BY TAKING OVER BEAZOL, MY PEOPLE MIGHT BE SPARED...
THE QUICKEST WAY WAS TO MARRY THE PRINCESS, BUT...
...THE OLD MAN SAW RIGHT THROUGH ME.

ARGENT, I'M NOT GOING TO GIVE UP.
LADY PRIMULA IS GOING TO BE MINE SOMEDAY!
WELL, I WON'T GIVE UP ON CURING YOU.
JUST BE AWARE OF THAT.
LADY PRIMULA, ARGENT ...
PLEASE CARE FOR TOYA... I MEAN, LORCA!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!
WHEN I GO BACK HOME, I'LL MAKE YOU AN HONORARY CITIZEN OF NAVARA.

THANK YOU!
I'M PROUD TO BE A CITIZEN OF BEAZOL NOW, SO IT'S NOT GOING TO CHANGE ANYTHING...
SINCE THE SILVER APOTH-ECARY'S HERE, RIGHT?
That's true, but...
ACTUALLY, I'VE GOT A NEW CRUSH!
WHISPER
I THOUGHT CARBEAU, THE DARK KNIGHT, WAS SCARY AT FIRST. HOWEVER, HE SAVED MY LIFE MANY TIMES DURING OUR INVESTIGATION, AND MY FEELINGS CHANGED...
Escorting her back home
YOU'RE SUCH A GIRL.
MY NAME IS UBELLA.
I WAS BORN ON A PEAR ORCHARD 17 YEARS AGO IN BEAZOL...
Take care!
MY LIFE MAY SEEM BORING, BUT THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF DRAMA LATELY...
EVERY-ONE HAS THEIR OWN STORY.
MY STORY ENDS HERE FOR NOW. UNTIL NEXT TIME...
CHATTER
CHATTER CHATTER
WHEN YOU FEEL BETTER, HAVE SOME OF MY PEARS!
THEY'RE GOOD FOR YOU!
Rp. 10/ The End

Epicauta
(Chapter 10)

Also known as Blister Beetles, these insects contain a poison known as cantharidin that causes blistering of the skin. It was used topically as a hair tonic, but ingestion of this poison can cause digestive distress and death in higher doses. As a result, it's also been used to poison people. It's no longer used medicinally due to its toxicity.

This bug is not one of the beetles illustrated on the cover of this volume.

Medicinal Charcoal
(Chapter 11)

There are records of Medicinal Charcoal, aka Activated Carbon, having been used in Ancient Egypt to treat people. It has a long history of medicinal use. Activated carbon has many microscopic caverns which result in an exceptionally high surface area. It's used to refine and bleach sugar due to its purifying and binding properties. It can be created from both animal bone or vegetative matter. Activated carbon made from palm husks was used during World War I as protection against poisonous gases.

It retains its use in modern medicine to treat oral overdose and poisoning due to their absorptive and binding properties.

Insects as Food
(Chapter 12)

Insects have been eaten as food long before human civilization adapted to an agricultural society. It's been regarded as part of a regular diet, rare treat, folkloric medicine and health food item throughout history.

In Japan, the dried larvae of a dobsonfly (Protohermes grandis) was eaten as a folkloric cure for children's illnesses during the Edo Period. It was said to restore health and vigor to the elderly.

* The usage and treatment of various poisons and medicines in this story has been modified or exaggerated. Medicines (not poisons) are safe when used properly.

Inside the King's Castle at Beazol
Beazol is a small kingdom located on the corner of the continent
HEY, ARGENT...
WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU AND PRIMULA?
GOOD MORNING, PRINCE LORCA.
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
I'VE BEEN AT THIS CASTLE FOR A MONTH.
I'VE NOTICED THAT YOU GUYS DON'T HAVE ANY PHYSICAL CONTACT.
Your relationship must be platonic?
HE SEEMS FINE TO ME.
BONK
OW!
WELL, IT'S A LONG STORY, BUT MY MASTER HAS A REASON ...
THAT'S IT?!
IF I RECALL, HE'S KISSED HER THREE TIMES AND EMBRACED HER ONCE...

RECENTLY, MY MASTER'S BEEN ON EDGE...
PRINCE LORCA, LET ME SEE YOUR ARM.
MY MASTER, ARGENT, IS THE HANDSOME ROYAL APOTHECARY WITH THE HEART OF A KNIGHT. HE'S KNOWN THROUGHOUT BEAZOL AS THE SILVER APOTHECARY.
I'M SODA THE APOTHECARY. ACTUALLY, I'M JUST AN APPRENTICE.
HOW CAN I TRUST SOMEONE THAT CAN'T FIX THEMSELVES?
YOU SHOULD BE SPENDING TIME TREATING YOUR OWN ILLNESS!
WHY? DID YOU GET CHICKEN POX OR MUMPS OR SOMETHING?
LORCA, WHAT'S WRONG?
CLICK
JAB
GUAAAHHH! THAT HUUUURTS!
MY MASTER MUST NOW COMPETE WITH A RIVAL FOR LADY PRIMULA'S LOVE!
HE HATES ME BECAUSE I'M THE ENEMY PRINCE AND YOUR SUITOR!
I JUST NEEDED BLOOD FOR ANALYSIS.
HE STABBED ME WITH A NEEDLE!
LADY PRIMULA, ARGENT'S TORTURING ME!

HIS NAME IS PRINCE LORCA, THE THIRD PRINCE OF NAVARA.
HE WAS PLANNING TO SEDUCE LADY PRIMULA IN AN ATTEMPT TO TAKE OVER BEAZOL.
HOWEVER, THE KING HAS TAKEN A LIKING TO HIM AND ACCEPTED HIM AS A POSSIBLE SUITOR FOR LADY PRIMULA'S HAND IN MARRIAGE IN THE FUTURE.
Apothecarius Argentum
Recipe 11 • To Each, Their Own
I WORRY ABOUT MY MASTER'S EMOTIONAL STATE.
HE'S BEEN ORDERED TO TREAT HIS RIVAL...
I WILL. I WANT TO MARRY YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
LORCA, THIS IS FOR YOUR HEALTH. PLEASE, BEAR WITH US.
NEE-NER
I'm worried he'll snap one day...
Can you rub where he stabbed and make it feel better?
Sure, where?

CARLI, I REALIZED SOMETHING TERRIBLE...
I WAS THINKING THE PRINCE REMINDED ME OF SOMEONE. HE REMINDS ME OF OUR KING!
HIS FRIENDLY EXTERIOR OFTEN COVERS HIS FIERCE, RUTHLESS SIDE.
HE'S GOOD AT UTILIZING ALL ASPECTS OF HIS PERSONALITY...
I HEAR THAT WOMEN TEND TO CHOOSE MEN THAT RESEMBLE THEIR FATHERS.

WAIT, THAT MEANS ...
WHO DO I RESEMBLE AGAIN?
OH, YOUR MAJESTY!
I THINK I'M MORE HANDSOME.

PRINCE LORCA, YOU'RE LOOKING BETTER.
THANKS TO YOUR MAJESTY, I'M RECOVERING.
ARGENT HAS BEEN TREATING ME LIKE HIS YOUNGER BROTHER!
♡
RUB RUB
I FORGOT LORCA... YOU HAVE 2 OLDER BROTHERS.
I'm the only lonely child...
SIBLINGS, HUH... I'M JEALOUS! THAT MUST BE FUN.
WE ALL HAVE DIFFERENT MOTHERS, THOUGH.

IF YOU LIKE LARGE, FUN FAMILIES, WE CAN HAVE LOTS OF KIDS WHEN WE GET MARRIED AND...
PRINCE LORCA...
I HEAR ABOUT BATTLES FROM THE OLDEST AND THE MIDDLE BROTHER GIVES ME SECRET BOOKS TO READ.
THEY'RE BOTH REALLY GOOD TO ME.
OH, REALLY?
Sounds like a difficult situation.
RUB RUB
I need to see your other arm.
RIGHT. FIRST, YOU NEED TO GET BETTER.
I SAID YOU'RE ONE OF THE CANDIDATES. DON'T FORGET ABOUT THAT...
STAB
GUAAAAHHH!
IS THIS SOME KIND OF WEIRD LOVE TRIANGLE?
THERE ARE NEUROLOGICAL ABNORMALITIES AND JOINT EDEMA. THERE'S ALSO METABOLIC ABNORMALITIES AND HIS ORGAN FUNCTION IS COMPROMISED.
THIS IS WHAT I KNOW OF PRINCE LORCA'S CONDITION.

CAR-BEAU ...
WHEN YOU WERE IN NAVARA WITH UBELLA, YOU SAID THEIR ENDEMIC DISEASE WAS WIDESPREAD.
YOUR MAJESTY ...
YES. THE MYSTERIOUS DISEASE AFFECTS THE NERVES AND THE PATIENTS EVENTUALLY LOSE CONTROL OF THEIR LIMBS.

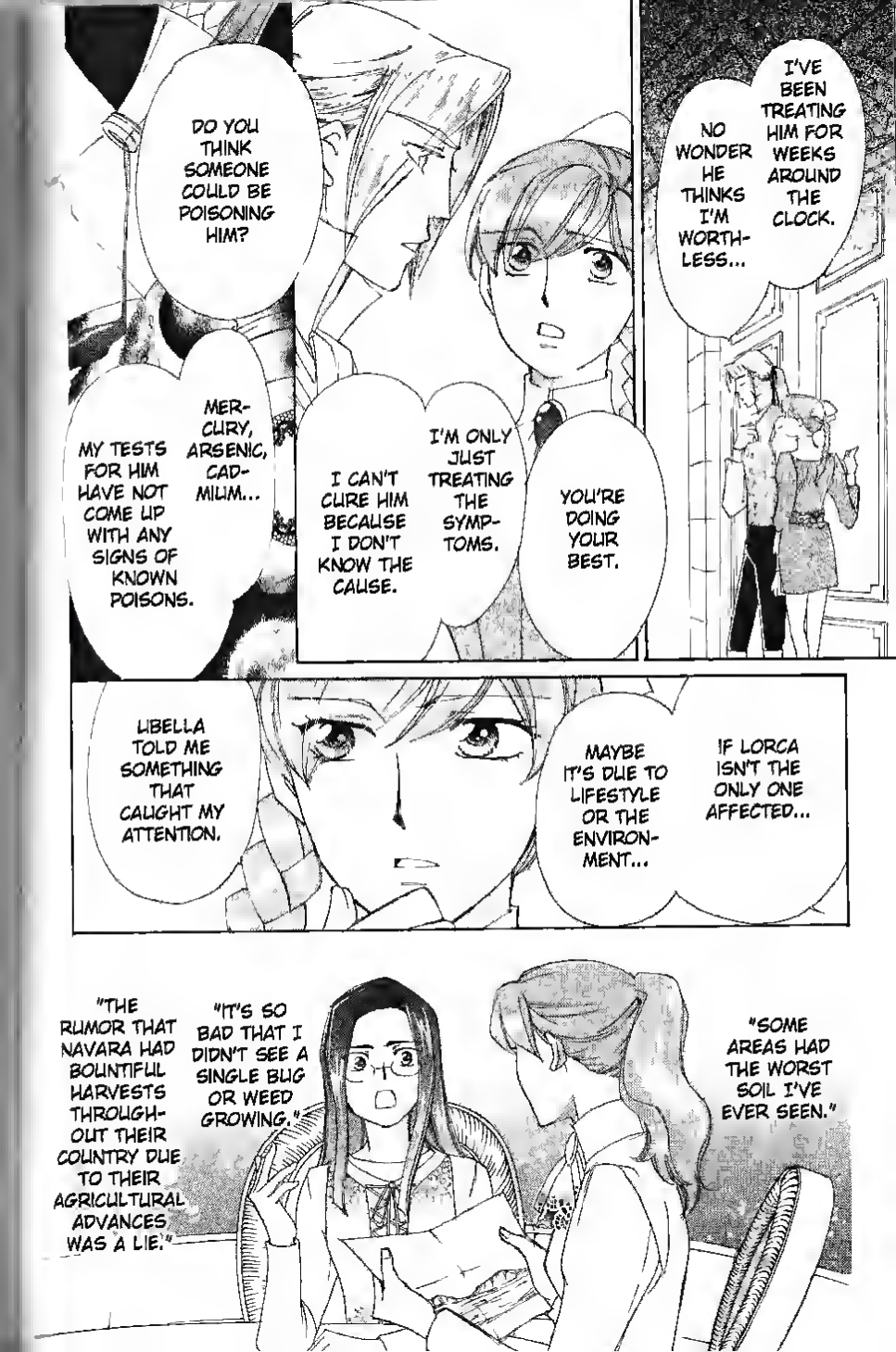
PRINCE LORCA, HERE'S THE BOOK YOU REQUESTED.
"ROYAL FAMILIAL CEREMONIAL OCCASIONS 101" AND "ALL ABOUT BEAUTY?" CAN'T YOU BRING ME SOMETHING MORE VALUABLE?
I FOUND THESE ON THE BOOKSHELF OF THAT GLASSES-WEARING PANSY.
THUD!!

WELL, MY BROTHER DOES HAVE INTER-ESTING HOBBIES ...
THIS IS FINE. AT LEAST IT'LL ENTER-TAIN ME FOR A WHILE.
THANKS FOR STEALING BOOKS AS USUAL, INFREE!

THAT'S BECAUSE HE'S GOT TO KEEP UP APPEARANCES AS A PRINCE.
THE PRINCE LOOKS HEALTHY ...
IT SEEMS TO AFFECT MOSTLY CHILDREN AND THE ELDERLY. THERE'S NO METHOD OF TREATMENT.
THEY EVENTUALLY DEVELOP SEVERE SEIZURES, FALL INTO A COMA AND DIE.
NOT YET.
HAVE YOU RECEIVED A REPLY FROM THE MESSENGER WE SENT TO NAVARA'S KING?
ARGON ...
CAN I HAVE THE REST?
I JUST ATE SOME PASTRIES EARLIER, SO I'M KIND OF FULL...
IT'S GREAT! AFTER ALL, YOU MADE IT FOR ME!
NO, NOT AT ALL ...
YOU DON'T LIKE WHAT I'VE MADE TODAY?
CLICK

I HAVEN'T EATEN LUNCH TODAY.
OH, SURE!
JOLT
NO!
I'LL FINISH THIS!!
PRINCE LORCA, YOU SHOULDN'T FORCE YOURSELF TO EAT. THAT'S NOT GOOD FOR YOU EITHER.
SHADDUP, YOU WORTHLESS HEALER! I DON'T WANNA HEAR YOUR ORDERS!
SPARK
SPARK
SPARK
NO FIGHTING, GENTLE-MEN!
I'LL MAKE MORE FOR EVERYONE!
YOU SHOULD JUST TELL ME THAT!
You don't wanna encourage her!
DAMN, MY MASTER WAS TRYING TO HELP YOU OUT, KID...
HAH!
CLUTTER
PRINCE LORCA?
I'M FINE, DON'T WORR...
See what happened.

PRINCE LORCA!
HOW LONG HAS HE HAD THESE SEIZURES?
FOR SOME TIME NOW.
AT FIRST, IT WAS MILD. IT ALSO DIDN'T LAST VERY LONG.
EVENTUALLY, THE SEIZURES BECAME MORE AND MORE FREQUENT.
I WONDER IF TRAVELING AND EXHAUSTION TOOK THEIR TOLL...
IT SEEMED TO HAVE SETTLED DOWN FOR A WHILE, BUT I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM IN SO ILL BEFORE...


I'VE BEEN TREATING HIM FOR WEEKS AROUND THE CLOCK.
NO WONDER HE THINKS I'M WORTHLESS...
DO YOU THINK SOMEONE COULD BE POISONING HIM?
YOU'RE DOING YOUR BEST.
I'M ONLY JUST TREATING THE SYMPTOMS.
I CAN'T CURE HIM BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW THE CAUSE.
MERCURY, ARSENIC, CADMIUM...
MY TESTS FOR HIM HAVE NOT COME UP WITH ANY SIGNS OF KNOWN POISONS.
IF LORCA ISN'T THE ONLY ONE AFFECTED...
MAYBE IT'S DUE TO LIFESTYLE OR THE ENVIRONMENT...
LIBELLA TOLD ME SOMETHING THAT CAUGHT MY ATTENTION.
"SOME AREAS HAD THE WORST SOIL I'VE EVER SEEN."
"IT'S SO BAD THAT I DIDN'T SEE A SINGLE BUG OR WEED GROWING."
"THE RUMOR THAT NAVARA HAD BOUNTIFUL HARVESTS THROUGHOUT THEIR COUNTRY DUE TO THEIR AGRICULTURAL ADVANCES WAS A LIE."

I-DID BRING SOME OF THE SOIL BACK.
IT'S AS IF THE SOIL WAS POISONED ...
EVEN DROUGHT AND PLANT DISEASES WOULDN'T WIPE EVERYTHING OUT SO THOROUGHLY.
I WISH I COULD GO THERE TO INVESTIGATE ...
MAYBE NAVARA HAS A TYPE OF POISON THAT YOU'RE NOT FAMILIAR WITH.
AT ONE TIME, BOTH COUNTRIES WERE BLESSED WITH FERTILE, PRODUCTIVE SOIL. WHY IS NAVARA NOW BEING AFFECTED SO BADLY...?
IF WE GO TO THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM, WE'VE GOT A HIGHER CHANCE OF FINDING USEFUL INFORMATION FOR A CURE.
I THOUGHT ABOUT IT ALL NIGHT. WE'RE NOT GETTING ANYWHERE BY STAYING HERE.
YOU WANT TO GO TO NAVARA?
SAY WHAT?

YOU MUST REMAIN HERE!
MY FATHER JUST RECOVERED FROM ILLNESS. ARGON, YOU SAID I WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY SOME DAY.
YOU EVEN SENT LIBELLA TO INVESTIGATE!
SHE'S A COMMON CITIZEN. YOU'RE NOT.
NAVARA IS STILL OUR ENEMY.
THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE YOU'LL BE TAKEN HOSTAGE.
WE HAVE THEIR THIRD PRINCE.
THEY WON'T DO ANYTHING SO STUPID!
YOU MAY BE RIGHT, LADY PRIMULA.
HE WAS BORN WEAK AND HAS NO CLAIM TO THE THRONE, BEING THE THIRD SON.
THERE'S ALSO A CHANCE THAT HIS FAMILY HAS NO NEED FOR HIM.
NAVARA HASN'T REPLIED TO OUR MESSAGE. THEY COULD BE IMPLYING THAT PRINCE LORCA'S BEEN DISCARDED.
I UNDERSTAND IT SOUNDS VERY CRUEL...

KINGS AREN'T HERE TO GIVE LIFE TO PEOPLE, BUT TO DIRECT HOW PEOPLE LIVE.
LORCA MAY PERISH HERE, AND THAT'S HIS FATE.
TO THINK THAT KINGS HAVE ANY CONTROL OVER LIFE AND DEATH ITSELF IS ARROGANCE AT ITS FINEST!
FATHER?
PRIMULA, YOU'RE NOT QUITE GETTING THE CONCEPT.
A KING HAS THE DUTY TO HELP OTHER PEOPLE LIVE!
THAT'S NOT RIGHT!
DON'T FORGET THAT YOU'RE ALIVE BECAUSE YOU HAVE PEOPLE SUPPORTING YOU.
LADY PRIMU-LA?

WELL, THAT'S CALLED PRIDE AND VANITY!
I'M A BOY AND A PRINCE.
LADY PRIMULA, YOU MUST REALIZE THAT IT'S NOT PRIDE, BUT HIS DUTY.
WERE YOU TRYING TO BE STRONG?
IF YOU'RE IN PAIN OR SUFFERING, YOU HAVE TO SPEAK UP.
...THE CHEF AND ATTENDANTS GET BLAMED AND PUNISHED FOR BEING "CARELESS."
EVERY TIME THE PRINCE BECOMES ILL...
CLANK
WHO'S THERE?
WHEN WE FIRST MET, HE WAS TRYING TO ROB ME. I WAS IN BED, SICK.
DON'T WORRY, LADY PRIMULA. I HAVE INFREE.

GO AHEAD.
BEFORE YOU LEAVE, TAKE MY LIFE IF YOU WANT.
"ARE YOU HERE TO ROB ME?"
I DON'T WANT TO SUFFER ANYMORE ...
HE WAS TRYING TO CONSOLE ME WHEN HE WAS ARRESTED BY MY GUARDS.
THERE'S NO NEED TO SUFFER ALL ALONE.
HERE, PEOPLE WON'T GET PUNISHED WHEN YOU'RE SICK.
LORCA ...

LADY PRIMULA...
KNOCK knock
CARLI, IF I CAN'T VISIT NAVARA, WHAT ABOUT SOME OTHER COUNTRY?
I'D LOVE TO ENLIST THE HELP OF HEALERS THERE.
YOU MUST NEGOTIATE THROUGH FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE FIRST!
THUD
ONCE YOU WRITE YOUR DRAFT, I'LL PROOFREAD FOR MISTAKES.
YOUR MISTAKES WILL REFLECT ON THE ENTIRE COUNTRY!
GOD, THIS PRINCESS BUSINESS IS SUCH A DRAG...
HEY ARGENT!
SLAM
I WAS THINKING WE SHOULD TAKE OFF TO NAVARA TOGETHER!
OH, HE'S NOT HERE...?
Lord's going to get worse if I don't act quickly...

THE MARK OF CADOCAEUS IS THE PROOF OF HIS STATUS AS A BASILISK...
GARNA'S ARROW LEFT ANOTHER SCAR ON HIS SHOULDER...
THAT SCAR ON HIS BACK IS FROM PROTECTING ME FROM THE ASSASSINS...
HE'S UNDRESSING...
He's staying overnight...
I DIDN'T REALIZE YOU WERE SO SCARRED UP...
LADY PRIMULA!
HOW TRAGIC...
DON'T TOUCH ME!
You seem to have no qualms over touching my skin...
I KNOW, I CAN ONLY TOUCH YOUR HAIR.
THESE SCARS ARE PROOF THAT I'M ALIVE THROUGH OTHERS' HELP...
MY ACTIONS COULD ENDANGER THE PEOPLE AROUND ME...
ARGENT!

"I WAS SENT BY A COUNTRY WORKING TO BRING BEAZOL TO A COLLAPSE."
"I WAS SENT TO KILL THE ROYAL FAMILY IN THE MOST EFFICIENT MANNER. I AM A POISONER."
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET FOR YOUR HEROIC ATTEMPT!
THE POINT WAS DIPPED IN CURARE.
I KNOW ANOTHER EXPERT ON POISON!
...YOU WERE HERE TO TALK TO ME?
LADY PRIMULA, I THOUGHT ...
.....
HE MUST HAVE DEVELOPED SOME RESISTANCE TO POISON SINCE HE SURVIVED YOUR BITE.
RIGHT.
HE WAS IN CHARGE OF MY MEALS AND SECRETLY SPIKING MY FOOD WITH MERCURY.
WASN'T GARNA THE FORMER ATTENDANT THAT TRIED TO ASSASSINATE YOU?

RATTLE RATTLE
HE'S BEEN IMPRISONED IN THE DUNGEON.
GARNA ...
WHAT COUNTRY HIRED YOU AS A POISONER?
I HEAR HE'S NOW THE OFFICIAL ROYAL APOTHECARY.
WORD OF YOUR ACTIVITIES HAS SPREAD TO THE DUNGEON.
MY, WHAT AN UNEXPECTED GUEST.
IT'S BEEN OVER 6 MONTHS SINCE OUR LAST INTERACTION.
WHY DO YOU ASK?
FINE.
I HAVE MORE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO ASK.
THIS MAN REFUSES TO TALK ABOUT WHERE HE'S FROM OR THE IDENTITY OF HIS RETAINER.

THRUST!!
CAN YOU TELL WHAT'S IN THIS SOIL?
WHY DON'T YOU...
...ASK YOUR FORMER FOOD TASTER?
HE'S A BASILISK. HE'S BEEN RAISED TO BECOME A MASTER POISONER.
I NEVER IMAGINED THAT A BASILISK WAS PROTECTING YOU... I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CAREFUL.
ARGENT HASN'T BEEN ABLE TO DETECT ANY-THING.
YOU'RE FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY SO I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT KNOW.

NAVARA.
NAVARA?
WHERE'S THIS SOIL FROM?
THE PEOPLE OF NAVARA, INCLUDING THEIR THIRD PRINCE, HAVE BEEN PLAGUED BY DISEASE. THE PRINCE IS NOW HERE IN BEAZOL FOR TREATMENT.
TELL ME IF YOU KNOW OF ANYTHING THAT COULD HELP.
NAVARA'S STILL BEAZOL'S ENEMY, RIGHT?
THIS DISEASE IS FUELING THEIR NEED FOR LAND AND...
...CAUSING THE BORDER DISPUTE BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES.
LADY PRIMULA ...
COME CLOSER.
LADY PRIMULA!

MY LADY ...
I'LL COME BACK LATER.
GARNA...
HE KNOWS SOME-THING ...
I'M A FAILED ASSASSIN! DEATH IS THE ONLY THING I GET TO LOOK FORWARD TO!
IF YOU WANNA KILL ME, GO AHEAD!
YOU BASTARD!
JABB
WE CAN KILL YOU RIGHT NOW!

WHY DON'T YOU JUST GIVE UP?
YOU'RE TENACIOUS ...
I'VE GOT NO-WHERE TO GO.
STOP THAT! YOU'LL GET BETTER SOON AND BE ABLE TO RETURN HOME...
YOU JUST WANNA LOOK GOOD IN FRONT OF LADY PRIMULA.
I'VE HAD ENOUGH. I CAN'T TAKE ANYMORE...
I TOLD YOU THAT I PLAN TO CURE YOU.
THEY WON'T LET ME READ OR DO ANYTHING. EVEN MY MOTHER LEFT THE CASTLE SOON AFTER I WAS BORN.
MY BROTHERS HAVE NEVER MINDED ME. THAT WAS A LIE.
MY FATHERS AND BROTHERS DON'T WANT ME. I KNOW IT.
...TO MARRY ME?
WILL YOU PROMISE...
I WON'T-

HE'S FALLEN INTO A COMA...
LORCA!
THAT'S WHAT I LOVE... ... ABOUT YOU...
I...
YOU'RE SO HONEST ...
GARNA ...
IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH NAVARA'S SOIL, WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME?
THEIR PRINCE IS DYING.
IT'S NONE OF MY BUSI-NESS.

GARNA, YOU'RE NOT USELESS!
YOUR TASTE IN FOOD WAS QUITE IMPECCABLE!
ONCE YOU'VE BECOME USELESS AND UNWANTED, DEATH BECOMES YOUR FRIEND...
BOTH YOU AND LORCA PREFER TO GIVE UP AND DIE!
OH, I SEE.
I'D LIKE TO PUT YOUR TALENTS TO WORK AGAIN.
RATHER THAN HAVE YOU ROT HERE...
MY FATHER WAS TALKING ABOUT HOW...
...TO LET PEOPLE LIVE, RATHER THAN JUST REMAIN ALIVE...
THE KING'S DUTY IS TO DISCERN OTHER PEOPLE'S TALENTS AND SHOW THEM THEIR PATH...
THAT'S WHY HE BROUGHT ARGENT, A BASILISK, AS MY FOOD TASTER...
HE ASKED UBELLA TO LOOK INTO NAVARA BECAUSE OF HER QUICK MIND...

THERE MUST BE SOMETHING YOU WANT, SOME KIND OF REQUEST?
LET'S SEE...
I'D LOVE TO HAVE A GOOD BOWL OF SOUP.
SOUP?
THIS IS YOUR LUCKY DAY!
?
WE SHOULD CALL FOR LADY PRIMULA.
GOOD IDEA.
DASH DASH
LADY PRIMULA?
SLAM
HERE YOU GO!

CLATTER
THIS IS VILE! WHAT IS IT?
WHAAAT? REALLY?
ARGENT AND LORCA BOTH LOVED IT!
YOU MADE THIS?
?
PEOPLE LOVE WHAT I MAKE!
UH-HUH! I RECENTLY STARTED COOKING!
THEY'VE OBVIOUSLY GOT BAD TASTE! I'M NOT ONE OF THEM!
I'M NOT HERE TO PLAY HOUSE WITH YOU!
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!!

WHY DON'T WE MAKE A BET?
IF I COULD COOK SOMETHING THAT WOULD MEET YOUR STANDARDS, YOU'LL TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW.
YOU WANT ME TO GET TO WORK RIGHT AWAY.
YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT I HAVE EXCEEDINGLY HIGH STANDARDS.
I'M GOING TO TRY. NEVER SAY NEVER, RIGHT?
CLICK
CLICK
"IT'S A SIMPLE ENOUGH JOB. YOU JUST HAVE TO TASTE MY DAUGHTER'S FOOD BEFORE SHE DOES!"
"...I'LL KILL YOU RIGHT NOW FOR YOUR INSO-LENCE."
"IF YOU REFUSE ..."
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, THE KING WAS GIVING ME ANOTHER CHANCE AT LIFE.

BY BRINGING ME TO THE BRINK OF DEATH, HE WAS SHOWING MY PATH TO LIFE...
MASTER!
PRINCE LORCA!
INFREE ...
WHERE'S INFREE?
I NEED TO TALK TO HIM.
HIS PULSE IS SLOWING DOWN.
WHERE'S LADY PRIMU-LA?
SHE'S BUSY.
YOU'VE STOLEN FROM THIS CASTLE. THESE BOOKS ARE FROM CARLI'S QUARTERS...
I'M FIRING YOU AS MY GUARD.
CAN YOU GIVE US PRIVACY?
INFREE ...
BUT ...

WHY ALL OF SUDDEN? I WAS FOLLOWING YOUR ORDERS...
YOU'RE NO LONGER MY GUARD!
YOU'VE DAMAGED MY REPUTATION AS A PRINCE!
LEAVE THE SWORD AND DISAPPEAR FROM MY SIGHT!
WHAT ABOUT THIS?
SLAT
IT'S NOT EVEN WORTH TALK-ING ABOUT.
GIVE UP. YOU'RE WASTING FOOD.
I CAN'T. I HAVE TO MAKE SOMETHING YOU'D LIKE.
I'M GOING TO KEEP TRYING.

WAIT.
MODERATE HEAT AND FILTERING IS IMPORTANT FOR SOUPS.
YOU HAVE TO GENTLY SIMMER THE STOCK WHILE SKIMMING THE BITTER FOAM THAT RISES TO THE SURFACE.
"TELL ME! WHAT'S FOR DESSERT?"
"GARNA, WHY DON'T YOU STAY AT THE TABLE AND TALK TO ME?"
SHE USED TO BE AN ENTITLED LITTLE BRAT...
THIS PRINCESS HAS CHANGED SO MUCH...
PLACE A CAN FILLED WITH PALM HUSK INTO THE CAULDRON, AND SET THE POT ON TOP OF THE CAN.
DON'T LET THE STOCK BOIL OVER.
INFREE...
THIS IS FOR THE BEST.
STARTING TODAY, YOU'RE A FREE MAN...
GOT IT.
PALM HUSK?

THANK GOD!
IT'S BECOMING MORE EDIBLE.
GOODBYE, INFREE...
MY ONLY FRIEND IN THE WORLD
...
YOU'VE DECIDED TO TAKE ON COOKING? YOU'VE ADVANCED IN SUCH A SHORT TIME.
I'VE CHANGED A LOT.
SO YOU'VE MATURED.
MAYBE YOU'LL UNDER-STAND NOW.
I THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO EXPERIENCE EVERYTHING.
EVEN THE BITTER PARTS OF LIFE.

ABOUT THE SOIL FROM NAVARA ...
IT'S NOT POISON. IT'S MEDICINE.
WE ALSO USED IT DOWN SOUTH TO MAKE FARMING LESS LABOR INTENSIVE.
IT'S USED TO KILL BUGS AND WEEDS.
IT ACCUMULATES IN THE BODY AND CAUSES HARM, SO WE STOPPED USING IT.
!
DIDN'T YOUR APOTH-ECARY TELL YOU?
MEDICINE CAN BECOME POISON AND VICE-VERSA DEPENDING ON THE DOSE?
WHAT CAN I DO?
YOU HAVE TO FLUSH HIS SYSTEM IN A SPECIFIC MANNER.
ACCORDING TO YOUR OBSERVATION, I'D BE WORRIED ABOUT KIDNEY AND LIVER DAMAGE.
YOU'LL HAVE TO FLUSH HIS BODY BY BINDING UP THE TOXINS WITH A *SPECIFIC MATERIAL* SO IT CAN BE CARRIED OUT OF HIS SYSTEM.
WHAT DO I NEED? WHERE CAN I GET THEM?

BLACK-ENED PALM HUSK?
I'M GOING TO SHOW YOU HOW TO PREPARE THE BLACKENED PALM HUSKS.
IT'S BEEN A FEW HOURS, SO IT SHOULD BE PARTIALLY DONE BY NOW.
IT'S IN YOUR CAULDRON.
HUH?!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BELIEVE ME.
DASH DASH
DASH
ARGENT, WHERE'S LORCA?!
LADY PRIMULA, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
GARNA TAUGHT ME HOW TO MAKE THIS.
IT'S AN ANTIDOTE!

ACTUALLY, CHARCOAL IS HIGHLY ABSORBENT.
IT'S USED TO FILTER WATER AND SUGAR, BUT IT'S BEEN USED AS AN ANTIDOTE FOR POISONING.
ANTIDOTE? LOOKS LIKE CHARCOAL TO ME.
TUMBLE
THE ABSORPTION CAPABILITY SEEMS TO BE MUCH HIGHER. THIS MAY WORK.
...THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM THE CHARCOAL I'VE USED.
I'VE TRIED IT IN ON LORCA, BUT...
LORCA!
I KNOW WHAT TO DO FROM HERE.
IT'S PALM HUSKS INSIDE THE CAULDRON. HE SAID IT NEEDS TO BE PROCESSED MORE...
HOW DID YOU...

CLANG
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
LORCA!!
YOU WON'T MARRY ME I'M NOT EVEN VALUABLE AS A HOSTAGE!
I REFUSE TO LIVE MY LIFE AS A WORTHLESS PRINCE!!
SLAP!!
LADY PRIMULA MADE IT HERSELF!
Dunno what it is, but...
LORCA, WE HAVE NEW MEDICATION FOR YOU TO TRY.

I ABSOLUTELY REFUSE!
HER COOKING WAS ALMOST ENOUGH TO SEND ME TO THE OTHER SIDE.
I LIED ABOUT THE FOOD BEING GOOD!
WHY ARE YOU SPILLING THE BEANS NOW!!
KTZ
KTZ
SLAM
YOU'VE INSULTED LADY PRIMULA'S GOOD WILL TOWARDS YOU! I REFUSE TO STAND BY AND WATCH YOUR INSOLENCE!
THAT'S RIGHT. YOU'RE NOT WORTHY OF LADY PRIMULA!
IF YOU WANT TO DIE, THEN I'LL HELP YOU ALONG!
YOU'VE FINALLY SHOWN YOUR TRUE COLORS, ARGENT!
PLEASE! WAIT!!
ARGENT, YOU...?

I'M NO LONGER YOUR SERVANT!
INFREE!
WHY DID YOU COME BACK?!
MOVE! THAT'S AN ORDER!
YOU CAN'T ORDER ME AROUND ANYMORE!
I DON'T KNOW HIM ANYMORE...
IF YOU WANT TO PROTECT HIM SO BADLY...
...MAYBE YOU SHOULD BE THE FIRST TO DIE, INFREE.
SODA, WAIT.
LADY PRIMULA'S MINE NOW THAT YOU'VE DISQUALIFIED YOURSELF!
IT'S TOO BAD YOUR MASTER WAS A SUICIDAL LOSER WHO HAS THROWN AWAY BOTH HIS LIFE AND COUNTRY!

I'M NOT A PATHETIC LOSER!
I'M THE THIRD PRINCE OF NAVARA!
KER-PSH
I WON'T LET YOU KILL INFREE OR TAKE LADY PRIMULA FROM ME!
LADY PRIMULA, I'D LIKE TO TAKE THAT MEDICINE.
I'M GOING TO LIVE THROUGH THIS NO MATTER WHAT!
I SEE...
SO HIS CONDITION IMPROVED ...

IT'S DIFFICULT TO REMOVE ALL THE TOXINS THAT HAVE BUILT UP IN HIS SYSTEM.
HE'S IMPROVED, BUT HE'S NOT CURED YET.
EITHER WAY, GOOD JOB.
FATHER, I'D LIKE TO REQUEST YOUR PERMISSION TO VISIT NAVARA.
KTZ
MY ROLE IS NOT TO BE PAMPERED WITHIN MY PALACE.
I WOULD LIKE TO PERFORM MY DUTY AS PRINCESS AND HEIR.
YOU WANT TO BE THE ONE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE KING...
YES.
MY POSITION SHOULD GIVE ME ACCESS TO THE KING OF NAVARA.
I GRANT YOU PERMISSION TO PERFORM YOUR DUTY AS PRINCESS. YOU HAVE FULL CONTROL OVER THE CHOICE OF ATTENDANTS THAT WILL ACCOMPANY YOU.
I'M GLAD YOU HAVEN'T JUST WANDERED OFF LIKE BEFORE. YOU'VE MATURED.
I HAVE ONE MORE FAVOR TO ASK.
THANK YOU.

I TOLD YOU I'M HERE TO FACE BITTER REALITY.
I'll take whatever you have to dish out
I ONLY SHOWED YOU THE ANTIDOTE BECAUSE I WAS SICK OF YOUR TERRIBLE FOOD.
I MAY BE BACK TO POISON YOU AGAIN.
GARNA, YOU'RE A FREE MAN NOW.
GO WHERE YOU WANT AND DO WHAT YOU WILL.
LADY PRIMULA...
I USED TO BE THE HEAD CHEF FOR THE PALACE OF ROSHNA.
SOUTH ...
I WAS TAKEN HOSTAGE AND FORCED TO BECOME THEIR POISONER.
WE WERE INVADED AND ABSORBED BY A COUNTRY IN THE SOUTH.
THAT COUNTRY WAS WIPED OFF THE FACE OF THIS EARTH.

I APPRECIATE YOUR ADVICE.
THE SOUTHERNERS HAVE TECHNOLOGY THAT SURPASSES THAT OF NAVARA.
"NAVARA'S NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY LOOKING TO EXPAND THEIR BORDERS."
"SMALLER NATIONS ARE UNITING IN THE SOUTH TO BECOME A LARGER EMPIRE."
By the way...
YOU SHOULD BE MORE STRAIGHTFORWARD.
You may be impervious to poison, but you're still a wimp.
BE CAREFUL, OR BOTH BEAZOL AND NAVARA WILL GET SWALLOWED UP BY THEM.
THEIR MEN HAVE INFILTRATED EVERYWHERE.
WHAT...?
YOU'VE MISUNDERSTOOD MY MASTER.
HE'S IN LOVE.
LOVE!
Ow!
BONK

HE'S COMPENSATED FOR HIS WEAKNESS THROUGH HIS STRONG WILL AND PRIDE.
I THOUGHT YOU MEANT IT! I HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE BLUFFING.
THE POWER OF LOVE... I'M IMPRESSED!
THE PRINCE REGAINED HIS WILL TO LIVE BASED ON YOUR WORDS...
THE KING HAS THE ABILITY TO SPOT THE BEST IN PEOPLE.
THE PRINCE IS VERY SERIOUS.
LORCA MAY BE A GOOD MATCH FOR LADY PRIMULA.
I ORDER YOU BOTH TO ACCOMPANY ME TO NAVARA.
ARGENT THE ROYAL APOTHECARY AND CARBEAU THE KNIGHT...

ARGENT THE SILVER APOTH-ECARY IS COMING WITH US, RIGHT?
I'LL BE FINE.
LORCA, YOU'RE STILL NOT WELL...
THIS IS MY DUTY AS THE PRINCE OF NAVARA!
I'M GOING WITH YOU!
AS YOU WISH!
IN THAT CASE, LORCA AND INFREE CAN GUIDE US THROUGH NAVARA.
AS YOU WISH.
IT'S BEEN A FEW MONTHS SINCE THE CEASE-FIRE.
THIS IS THE FIRST FOREIGN TRIP FOR LADY PRIMULA OF BEAZOL...
PRINCE LORCA, YOU MUST TAKE YOUR MEDICINE ...
LORCA, REMEMBER, YOU'RE JUST A CANDIDATE.
OH GREAT! IT'S OUR ENGAGE-MENT VACATION!
HUG HUG
Pg. 11/ The End

LORCA, WHAT'S THAT BUILDING?
IT WAS BUILT TO BLOCK THE FLOW OF THE RIVER.
THE DAM HAS SEVERAL IRRIGATION DITCHES CARRYING WATER TO VARIOUS FARMS.
HA HA HA
COOL! I'D LOVE TO HAVE SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN MY COUNTRY...
ONCE WE GET MARRIED, I'LL BUILD YOU AS MANY AS YOU WANT...
MY NAME IS LADY PRIMULA. I'M THE PRINCESS OF A SMALL COUNTRY CALLED BEAZOL.
I'M ON MY WAY TO NAVARA ON AN INFORMAL DIPLOMATIC MISSION.
THIS IS MY FIRST TIME OUTSIDE OF BEAZOL...
MY LADY!
YOU'RE BEING TOO CONSPICUOUS. WE'RE NOT HERE FOR LEISURE!
Please remain close to the group.

Few Days Earlier
The King's Castle at Beazol
YOU'RE HEADING TO AN ENEMY COUNTRY.
THE KING OF NAVARA MAY SEE THE PRINCESS, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT SHE'S WELCOME THERE IN ANY WAY. PLEASE BE CAREFUL.
CARBEAU THE KNIGHT, ARGENT THE ROYAL APOTH-ECARY...
PLEASE PROTECT LADY PRIMULA.
WE WON'T DISAP-POINT YOU.
PRIMU-LA...
I WILL LET YOU EXERCISE YOUR OWN JUDGMENT. STAY STRONG.
I'LL BE FINE, FATHER.
I'LL PROPOSE AID AND THE CURE TO THEIR DISEASE. WE'LL BE ALLIES IN NO TIME!
EASY PEASY!
NOT TO MENTION THAT SHE'S GOT THE PRINCE OF NAVARA ON HER SIDE!
I WON'T EVEN LET MY FATHER, THE KING OF NAVARA, COME BETWEEN US!

PRINCE LORCA, DON'T FORGET THAT YOU'RE ONLY A CANDIDATE!
YOU HAD BETTER NOT TOUCH MY DAUGHTER!
WE'RE OFF ON OUR HONEYMOON!
DON'T WORRY. ARGENT WILL KEEP HIM AWAY!
YOU'RE THE ONE THAT AGREED TO HAVE HIM AS A CANDIDATE FOR LADY PRIMULA'S HAND!
WAIT! I'M GOING WITH THEM!
PRIMULA ...
IT'S A RIFLE USED FOR SCARING OFF BIRDS.
INFREE, WHAT'S THIS? IT JUST EXPLODED!
LADY PRIMULA! WATCH OUT!
I FOUND IT ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD.
I wasn't sure what it was when I found it
WHERE DID YOU FIND SUCH A DANGEROUS THING?
I WONDER HOW EVERYONE'S DOING BACK AT THE CASTLE?

WE NEED TO STAY OUT OF PEOPLE'S SIGHT...
I KNOW A GOOD ROAD FOR THAT!
After all, we've got two sheltered kids to look after.
I WONDER IF WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT THROUGH NAVARA IN ONE PIECE.
I want an attendant that used to be a thief!
INFREE, YOUR KNOWLEDGE FROM YOUR DAYS AS ROBBER HAS COME IN VERY HANDY!
BEAZOL AND NAVARA USED TO BE A SINGLE COUNTRY.
NAVARA CLAIMED INDEPENDENCE AFTER SEVERAL SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES ADOPTED NEW TECHNOLOGY.
EVER SINCE THEN, NAVARA HAS CONTINUED TO INNOVATE. BEAZOL HAS PROTECTED THEIR TRADITIONAL WAYS.
HOWEVER, SEVERAL YEARS AGO, BORDER DISPUTES BEGAN TO SURFACE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES...

ONE OF THE CATALYSTS FOR THE DISPUTE IS THE MYSTERIOUS ILLNESS THAT PLAGUES NAVARA...
I IMAGINED A MORE TRAGIC COUNTRY AFTER READING YOUR REPORT, CARBEAU.
IT'S NOT AS BAD AS I IMAGINED.
I haven't seen any sick people...
I'M SURE NOT ALL REGIONS ARE AFFECTED SEVERELY. MAYBE NAVARA HAS STARTED TO ADDRESS THEIR PROBLEMS.
THAT MEANS I WON'T HAVE WORK TO DO. BOOORING!
MY LADY, THAT'S RUDE!
KRAUSS
LEAVE ALL YOUR BELONGINGS WITH US.
COOPERATE AND WE'LL SPARE YOUR LIVES!
LADY PRIMULA, HIDE!
WE SHOULD AVOID ALTERCATION IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.
LET'S GIVE THEM SOME CARGO THAT'LL SATISFY THEM AND...
LEAD

OH YEAH, I HEARD ABOUT HIM.
WHO DO YOU THINK I AM?! I'M PRINCE LORCA, THE THIRD PRINCE OF NAVARA!
HE'S THE WEIRD KID THAT NEVER SHOWS UP FOR PUBLIC EVENTS.
THE THIRD PRINCE?
Oh man...
HOW DARE YOU!
HE REMINDS ME OF MY EARLIER SELF...
THIS SWORD IS PROOF--
I THINK HE'S PROBABLY DEAD BY NOW!
THOSE FAKE SWORDS CAN BE FOUND IN ANY PAWN-SHOP.
HEH, WHO KNOWS IF YOU'RE REAL? NOBODY HAS EVER SEEN THE YOUNGEST PRINCE.
LEAP
THUD
SLOWLY

HOW DARE YOU SPEAK TO LORCA LIKE THAT!
I was late...
YOU'VE GOT A WOMAN WITH YOU...
FINE, LEAVE THIS WENCH BEHIND AND WE'LL LET YOU PASS.
DRAG DRAG DRAG
WHO ARE YOU CALLING A WENCH!
DON'T TOUCH UBELLA!
UBELLA!
NOBODY ORDERED YOU TO ACT!
"UBELLA?" IS HE TALKING TO ME?
I guess I need to step in...
CRACK
Why is he talking about them?
I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY YOU WOULDN'T KNOW MY NAME.
YOU MUST KNOW THE NAMES OF MY BROTHERS, ADONA THE WAR GOD AND DANIEL THE BALLADEER OF LOVE!
ADONA'S GODLIKE PHYSIQUE...
DANIEL'S LUSTROUS BLONDE LOCKS...
?
?

IT'S THE OLDER PRINCES OF NAVARA!
Please forgive us!
THAT'S RIGHT!
WE HEARD RUMORS OF CORRUPTION IN THIS AREA, SO WE'VE BEEN INVESTIGATING UNDERCOVER!
I HEARD DANIEL HAD GOLDEN LOCKS...?
MY BROTHER --
Whaaat?!
--HAS BEEN SO WORRIED OVER OUR COUNTRY THAT HIS HAIR HAS TURNED GREY!
HE WINS THE ARGUMENT!
I APOLOGIZE FORT THE GRAVE INSOLENCE OF MY SUBJECTS. I HIRED THEM TO PATROL MY TERRITORY TO KEEP THE ROADS FREE OF ROBBERS.
MY NAME IS TOKLES AND I'M THE LORD OF THIS MANOR. PLEASE REST IN MY HUMBLE ABODE...
I'm a Prince?
STEALING FROM TRAVELERS COUNTS AS PATROL, EH...
PUTTER PUTTER

SERVANTS STAY OVER THERE.
I'M SORRY, IT'LL ONLY BE FOR A SINGLE NIGHT.
I'M USED TO IT. IT'S OKAY.
I'LL HAVE THE SERVANTS PREPARE A MEAL...
GREAT! I'VE BEEN WANTING SOME HELP!
I'M BART. I'M ONE OF THE OLD-TIMERS HERE.
NICE TO MEET YOU. THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF US...
TAKING CARE?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU'RE A SERVANT, JUST LIKE ME!
NOOOO!
YOU'LL BE WORKING WHILE YOU'RE HERE!
PLEASE ENJOY YOUR MEAL!!

YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR.
How do I use a knife...
THERE ARE MANY FEUDAL LORDS THAT HAVE NEVER MET THE ROYAL FAMILY.
CARBEAU, ARGENT... DON'T SCREW UP.
WE JUST HAVE TO WING IT.
THIS IS HOW I LOOK ALL THE TIME...
PRINCE ADONA, WHY DO YOU LOOK SO UPSET?
WELCOME TO OUR MANOR. I'M LADY IRMA, THE LORD'S DAUGHTER.
Oh..
PRINCE ADONA'S WORRIED ABOUT HIS WIFE AND SON BACK AT THE CASTLE.
THAT'S RIGHT.

I'D LOVE TO HEAR YOUR SONGS!
I HEAR PRINCE DANIEL IS STILL SINGLE AND TRAVELS THE COUNTRY AS THE BALLADEER OF LOVE!
UHM... SURE...
Now her focus is on Daniel
PRINCE ADONA IS KNOWN FOR HIS DEDICATION TO HIS FAMILY
YES, HE'S A VERY FAITHFUL MAN...
I HAD NO IDEA...
He smells good...
I'M GLAD YOU FOUND ANOTHER BELIEVER, BROTHER!
PAT
LORCA, WHAT IS THIS BALLADEER OF LOVE?
PAT
PAT
I'M EXHAUSTED!
POOF
I WAS SEPARATED FROM INFREE AND GIVEN LAUNDRY DUTIES ALL DAY. I HAD A SLICE OF BREAD FOR DINNER...
I'M STARVING ...

HAVE SOME OF THIS. I'VE BEEN SAVING IT FOR A RAINY DAY...
WHAT? YOU'RE STILL HUNGRY?
IN THAT CASE...
REALLY?!
WHAT IS IT?
IT'S STEWED DRAGON-FLY LARVAE.
I'M NOT SURE...
...WHEN I WAS YOUNG, IT WAS A RARE TREAT!
YOUNGER KIDS ARE SO SPOILED!
THEY SAY BUGS ARE DISGUSTING, BUT...
I PROMISED MYSELF I'D TRY ANYTHING THROWN MY WAY.
I'LL TRY SOME.
ALL WE HAVE ARE TENACIOUS COCK-ROACHES.
FINE, THEY'RE NOT EASY TO COME BY AROUND HERE.

THIS ISN'T BAD! THE TEXTURE IS SIMILAR TO SHRIMP!
I NEVER THOUGHT BUGS WOULD TASTE LIKE THIS!
!
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
YOU'RE REALLY STRANGE. ARE YOU REALLY FROM NAVARA?
Oh!
I'M FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY. THE PRINCE BOUGHT ME AS HIS ATTENDANT...
SOMEONE WOULD PAY FOR THE LIKES OF YOU? OUR PRINCE MUST BE STRANGE HIMSELF...
RUSTLE
I WONDER IF LADY PRIMULA'S ALL RIGHT...
I BET SHE'S HUNGRY.
CREAK

WHAT?
I'M NOT SO SURE...
IT'LL BE JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE...
SLIDE
MY BED IS FREEZING. CAN I SNUGGLE WITH YOU?
I'M HERE!
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO GO CHECK ON YOU.
I SUPPOSE THAT'S ...
... OKAY ...
GUAAAAHH!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
NEXT ROOM
I knew it.

IRMA, MY BROTHER IS WEARY FROM TRAVELING.
PLEASE, NOT TODAY.
I WANTED TO HEAR YOUR SONGS OF LOVE...
I'LL GIVE YOU A MASSAGE!
DON'T BE SO SHY!
NO THANKS.
IRMA, YOU HAVE A COCKROACH ON YOUR BACK!
TURN
TURN
KYAAAHH!

DASH
DASH
DASH
GROSS! MAIDS, PREPARE A BATH!
THAT WAS KIND OF EXTREME, DON'T YOU THINK?
SHE DIDN'T LEAVE ME MUCH CHOICE.
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, ARGENT ...
...MY BROTHER WOULDN'T BAT AN EYE AT THE SIGHT OF A NUDE WOMAN.
WHAT KIND OF MAN IS HE?
HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE SOME BALLADEER OF LOVE?
HE LOVES TO TRAVEL TO DIFFERENT MANORS AND EXTOL THE VIRTUES OF LOVE THROUGH SONG.
IT SOUNDS GOOD, BUT...
...IN REALITY, HE JUST MAKES USE OF HIS GOOD LOOKS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WOMEN.
HE'S VERY GOOD AT SEDUCING WOMEN VERY QUICKLY.

I'LL SEE IF I CAN FIND ONE OF HIS SECRET BOOKS FOR YOU.
NO THANK YOU.
No wonder you're mature for your age...
AFTER ALL, I OWE YOU, ARGENT. I'D ALSO LIKE TO WIN LADY PRIMULA FAIR AND SQUARE FROM YOU.
YOU'RE NOT RECOVERED YET. THINK OF YOURSELF. THERE'S NO REASON FOR US TO COMPETE.
YOU WANT THE PRINCESS, RIGHT?
WERE YOU LYING TO ME WHEN I WAS TRYING TO KILL MYSELF?
I WAS TRYING TO INCITE YOU TO LIVE.
EVEN IF I WAS SPEAKING THE TRUTH, LADY PRIMULA AND I CAN NEVER BE TOGETHER.
THE KING HAS MADE YOU THE CANDIDATE FOR LADY PRIMULA'S HAND.
SO YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE UP BECAUSE OF WHAT THE KING SAID?
I THINK YOU'RE A GREAT HEALER, BUT YOU'RE A PATHETIC MAN!

I COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE A WOMAN I LOVE ...
WITH ANOTHER MAN!
OH, AND STOP WEARING PERFUME TO BED, YOU CREEP!
SLAM
I HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE...
CRUNCH
NEIGH

WHAT? THE ROAD'S NOT PASSABLE?
THERE WAS A MUDSLIDE DURING THE RAIN LAST NIGHT.
WE'LL START WORKING ON CLEARING THE ROAD, BUT IT'LL TAKE A FEW DAYS.
PLEASE, STAY A FEW MORE NIGHTS.
I'LL MAKE SURE TO MAKE MEALS THAT WILL BRING PRINCE DANIEL'S VIGOR BACK!
THAT SOUNDS MARVELOUS, IRMA.
.....
You're trapped!
IRMA'S GOT GRAND PLANS TO CAPTURE YOUR HEART...
SO, WE'RE STUCK HERE FOR A FEW MORE DAYS.
IT WON'T BE LONG, I PROMISE.

HOW'S ARGENT?
HE'S EATING. CARBEAU WENT TO SEARCH FOR ANOTHER WAY OUT OF HERE.
I THINK SO. I'LL LEARN AS MUCH AS I CAN.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, PRINCE LORCA!
SWING
SWING
SWING
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, LADY PRIMULA?
I SEE.
YOU'RE HERE IN NAVARA ...
...TO SAFE-GUARD OUR FUTURE, RIGHT?
WHAT?
I CAN COUNT ON YOU, RIGHT?
LADY PRIMU-LA...

WE'RE GOING TO GET MARRIED ...
...AND BRING PEACE TO BOTH OUR COUNTRIES, RIGHT?
I CAN'T REPLY TO THAT RIGHT AWAY.
WE HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF NAVARA'S PROBLEMS FIRST.
RIGHT?
I NEED TO GET BACK TO WORK.
I DON'T NEED BART TO YELL AT ME!
RESOLVING THE SITUATION COULD TAKE YEARS...
PLEASE, PRINCE DANIEL!
SHE AVOIDED ANSWERING MY QUESTION AGAIN.

LOOK WHAT I FOUND IN THE SOUP...
KYAAAAH!
CHNKK
YOU'RE NOT HUNGRY AT ALL.
I'M ALMOST FULL...
SHE'S STILL AT IT...
SOME-BODY! OVER HERE!
I AM SO SORRY, PRINCE DANIEL!
HOW DO I HANDLE THIS SITUATION WITH HIM?
LORCA SURPRISED ME...
I WAS LYING.
It's just a rock.
Was he trying to help me?
HEH!
DASH-DASH DAS

GOD, I HATE BUGS! I HATE THIS PLACE!
I'VE FOUND 2 COCKROACHES IN THE HOUSE! PLEASE COVER THE AREA WITH THE PESTICIDE!
BART! ARE YOU HERE?
LADY IRMA, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
LADY IRMA'S TERRIFIED OF INSECTS.
PESTICIDE... DOES THAT KILL BUGS AND WEEDS?
YOU'RE USING IT HERE?
IT KILLED ALL THE BUGS!
PEOPLE THINK THAT PESTICIDE IS THE CAUSE OF THE COUNTRY-WIDE PLAGUE IN NAVARA!
WE ADOPTED THE DRUG MUCH LATER THAN OTHER PARTS...
FOR A FEW YEARS NOW.
YOU MUST STOP USING THE DRUG RIGHT AWAY!

EVERY TIME WE USE IT, WE GET SICK.
WE KNOW IT'S NOT GOOD FOR US.
THAT'S WHAT I HEARD FROM A HEALER.
IT'S A LOT MORE WORK THAN YOU KNOW.
FARMING IS LABOR INTENSIVE.
THEN WHY?
PESTICIDES AND TECHNOLOGY HAVE MADE OUR LIVES MUCH EASIER.
WE STARVE TO DEATH IF WE DON'T GET ENOUGH HARVEST. PEOPLE USED TO DIE OF FAMINE.
BUGS CAN EAT YOUR ENTIRE HARVEST AND CAUSE DISEASE...
YOU CAN PULL WEEDS BUT THEY KEEP COMING BACK.
IN BEAZOL, WE DIDN'T--

NAVARA AND BEAZOL ARE DIFFERENT.
NAVARA IS LOCATED TOWARD THE SOUTH. AS A RESULT, WE HAVE MORE TEMPESTUOUS WEATHER AND BUGS. WE'VE RESOLVED THOSE MATTERS WITH TECHNOLOGY.
YOU CAN'T EXPECT PEOPLE TO GIVE IT UP SO EASILY.
...
CLOP CLOP CLOP CLOP CLOP
SMOKE?
WHAT ARE PEOPLE DOING OVER HERE?
LOOKS LIKE A ROAD OVER THERE...

THIS IS...!
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, LIFE IN BEAZOL ISN'T EASY, EITHER.
LACK OF TECHNOLOGY MEANS PEOPLE HAVE TO WORK HARDER.
WE ALSO HAVE POOR PEASANTS ...
LIFE WON'T GET EASIER WITHOUT ADOPTING NEW IDEAS.
HOWEVER, NEW IDEAS DON'T GUARANTEE A BETTER SITUATION...
I DON'T KNOW ...
...WHAT'S RIGHT ANYMORE!
HEY, ARGENT ...
PRINCE DANIEL, I'M SO SORRY ABOUT YESTERDAY!

ARGENT BELONGS TO ME!
HOW DARE HE FLIRT WITH OTHER WOMEN!
SO THAT'S WHAT HE'S BEEN UP TO...
...WHILE I'VE WORKING MY BUTT OFF, EATING BUGS!!
Let's go inside
THUD
I MADE THESE PASTRIES JUST FOR YOU.
THEY LOOK DELIGHTFUL.
LORCA ...
SEE?
Oh!
YOU'RE ALSO IN LOVE WITH HIM.
I WISH YOU WOULD JUST BE HONEST WITH ME.
NO, IT'S NOT LIKE THAT.
ARGENT AND I...

GIVE UP ON ARGENT! HE'S A COWARD!
WHY NOT ME? IS IT BECAUSE I'M SICK? IS IT BECAUSE I'M THE PRINCE OF NAVARA?
NO, I DO LOVE YOU TOO, LORCA!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY LOVE?
YOU JUST ENJOY MY COMPANY?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE BOTH OF YOU?
COMMONERS MARRY INTO ROYALTY ALL THE TIME! MY MOTHER WAS A COMMONER, TOO!
IF YOU LOVE EACH OTHER... I DON'T GET IT!
ARGENT AND I CAN NEVER BE TOGETHER!

LADY PRIMULA!
PRINCE LORCA ...
I CAN'T TALK ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE...
IT'S PATHETIC OF ME TO LASH OUT IN A JEALOUS FIT...
MY COUNTRY AND MY RELATIONSHIPS...
I'M STARTING TO SEE THINGS MORE CLEARLY...
SO MANY COUNTRIES ...
SO MANY PEOPLE ...
SO MANY DIVERGENT IDEAS...
STUMBLE
THE WORLD IS MUCH BIGGER THAN I THOUGHT, WITH SO MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE!
RUD

IT'S NOT--
--EASY AT ALL!
"BE CAREFUL, OR BOTH BEAZOL AND NAVARA WILL GET SWALLOWED UP BY THEM."
"THEIR MEN HAVE INFILTRATED EVERYWHERE."
"NAVARA'S NOT THE ONLY COUNTRY LOOKING TO EXPAND THEIR BORDERS."
"ONCE YOU TAKE THE THRONE, YOU'LL HAVE TO GO BEYOND BEAZOL'S BORDERS."
I MUST BECOME STRONGER ...
UNHH
OH?
BART! HELLO!
URGH...
WHAT SHOULD I TELL BART ABOUT BEING LATE?

BART, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
IT'S NOTHING ...
ARE YOU SICK WITH THE DISEASE...
PLEASE! DON'T TELL ANYONE!
IF THEY FIND OUT, I'LL HAVE TO LEAVE!
LEAVE? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
CARBEAU?
WHEN LORDS FIND OUT THEIR SERVANTS ARE ILL, THEY GET EXPELLED...
...AND ARE SENT TO LIVE IN A CAMP.
I CAME ACROSS A CAMP WHILE I WAS SEARCHING FOR AN ALTERNATE ROUTE.
SICK PEOPLE GET HERDED THERE AND LEFT TO DIE.
THAT'S THEIR WAY OF DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM.
BUT...
IF I'M GOING TO DIE, I'D RATHER DIE HERE!

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING?
WHY HAVEN'T YOU SPREAD THE PESTICIDE!
WAIT, BART'S-
NEVER MIND! I'LL DO IT!
LADY IRMA...?!
HURRY! YOU HAVE TO STOP HER!
THE PESTICIDE HAS TO BE HANDLED VERY CAREFULLY.
IT'S VERY VOLATILE. THE FUMES...
...AND DIRECT CONTACT CAN CAUSE POISONING.
CAR-BEAU ...
CALL LORCA AND ARGENT. PLEASE LOOK AFTER BART.
PRINCESS, THIS IS TOO DANGEROUS TO HANDLE BY YOURSELF!

I'LL TAKE CARE OF LADY PRIMULA!
SLAM
IRMA, DON'T TOUCH THAT WITH YOUR BARE HANDS!
LADY?
IT'S POISONOUS!
LADY PRIMULA? COULD SHE BE...?!
YOU'RE A SERVANT! HOW DARE YOU ORDER ME AROUND?!
IT'S NOT SAFE FOR YOU TO BE IN HERE!

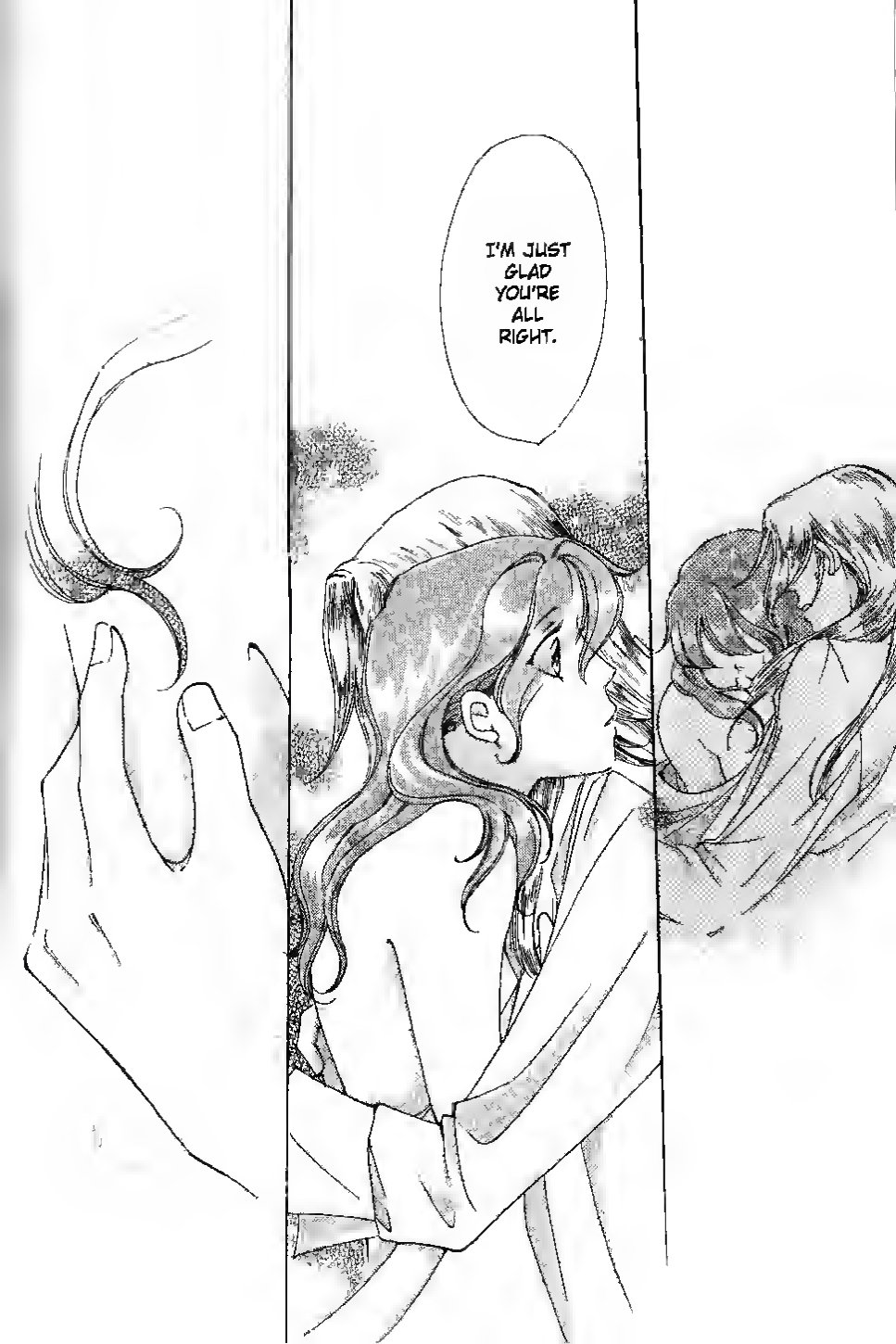
LEAVE ME ALONE!
SKM
LADY PRIMULA, BART TOLD US--
KOFF, KOFF
LADY PRIMULA!
MOVE!

ARGENT!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
RIP
LADY PRIMULA!
THE POISON CAN BE ABSORBED THROUGH HER SKIN! SHE NEEDS TO BE BATHED RIGHT AWAY!
POISON?!
ARGENT ...
PREPARE SOME SALTWATER FOR HER BATH! QUICK!
LORCA, DON'T JUST STAND THERE!
Y...YES!

HOW'S LADY PRIMULA?
LADY PRIMULA AND BART ARE BOTH FINE.
I'M SORRY, I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CAREFUL ...
ARGENT, I'M SORRY I CALLED YOU A COWARD.
I'M MORE OF A WIMP THAN YOU.
I HEARD YOU SAY POISON AND I FROZE.
I COULDN'T EVEN HELP THE PRINCESS.
THAT'S NORMAL.
WHAT ABOUT YOU ARGENT?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M FINE.
POISON DOESN'T WORK ON ME.

WHAT'S THAT, INFREE?
THE SEAL OF HERMES' STAFF...
HE'S A BASILISK ...?
THEIR HAIR TURNS MORE PLATINUM AS THEIR TOXICITY INCREASES. THEY ALSO SMELL LIKE THE SWEET SCENT OF DEADLY BLOOMS...
THEY WERE PURCHASED BY NOBILITY AND POWERFUL MEN AS FOOD TASTERS AND ASSASSINS.
A SECRET, ANCIENT EASTERN ORGANIZATION THAT RAISED HUMANS WITH POISONOUS FLESH TO BE USED AS BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS.
HOWEVER, THEY CANNOT COME INTO CONTACT WITH OTHERS.
THEY CAN EAT AND HANDLE ANY POISON.
"ARGENT AND I CAN NEVER BE TOGETHER!"
"EVEN IF YOU'RE SPEAKING THE TRUTH, LADY PRIMULA AND I CAN NEVER BE TOGETHER."
"WE DINED TOGETHER, AND HE WAS THE SHIELD THAT PROTECTED MY LIFE. ATTEMPTS TO POISON ME ALMOST ENDED UP KILLING HIM ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS."
"AFTER ALL, HE'S MY FORMER FOOD TASTER."

THAT'S WHAT THEY MEANT...
IT'S NOT JUST BECAUSE OF THEIR CLASS DIFFERENCES...
SLAM
YOU WERE MEAN!
YOU SCRUBBED ME DOWN LIKE I WAS A DIRTY POTATO!
.....
YOU DIDN'T MIND GETTING NUDE DURING YOUR BALL!
I DID MIND, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU AND LORCA!


I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.

ARGENT?
I'M SURE LORCA WANTS TO SEE YOU.
I'M SORRY.

"CLASS AND PHYSICAL DISTANCE CAN'T BREAK THE BOND THAT WE HAVE."
"WE HAVE A DEEP, STRONG BOND."
ARGENT...
THANK YOU FOR SAVING MY DAUGHTER.
PLEASE BE CONSERVATIVE WITH THE PESTICIDE USE. WE'RE HERE TO DETERMINE THE SAFETY OF THE MATERIAL.
BUGS AREN'T ALL BAD.
THAT MEANS THE BUGS WILL COME BACK!
BUGS CAN BE AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF FOOD.
DOBSONFLY LARVAE GIVE STRENGTH. COCKROACHES CONTAIN CHEMICALS THAT IMPROVE CIRCULATION...
AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I'VE READ.
KOFF
He's right!

PRINCE DANIEL! FROM NOW ON, I WILL ABIDE BY YOUR WORDS AND SWEAR TO LOVE INSECTS!
SYCOPHANT
I'M GLAD TO HEAR IT.
GOODBYE!
SO THAT'S THE PRINCESS OF STEEL OF BEAZOL AND THE SILVER APOTHECARY.
THEY SURE DO SEEM LIKE STRONG PEOPLE...
ARGENT, YOU PLAYED THE BALLADEER OF LOVE QUITE WELL!
CACKLE
CACKLE
CACKLE
CACKLE
YOU'RE THE ONE THAT TOLD ME NOT TO SCREW UP.
DON'T YOU THINK HE WAS PRETTY GOOD?
OH... SURE.

YOU SHOULD TRY TO FIX YOUR OWN BODY.
FIRST, THOUGH-- THE SICK PEOPLE AT THE CAMP NEED YOUR ATTENTION ...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE!
WHO ARE YOU? WE'RE THE THREE PRINCES OF NAVARA!
SO YOU'RE THE IMPOS-TORS WE'VE HEARD ABOUT!
I'M THE FIRST PRINCE ADONA.
THIS IS THE SECOND PRINCE DANIEL.
IDENTIFY YOURSELVES AND STATE YOUR REASON FOR USING OUR NAMES!
ADONA...
THEY'RE THE REAL DEAL!

Afterwords

Thanks to your support, I'm finished with volume 3 as well as the second part of the story. There was a possibility that this series would not continue past part 1. Part 2 is filled with more information about neighboring countries and the deep relationship between Argent and Primula. By the time you get this volume, I hope we've moved onto the next phase of the story.

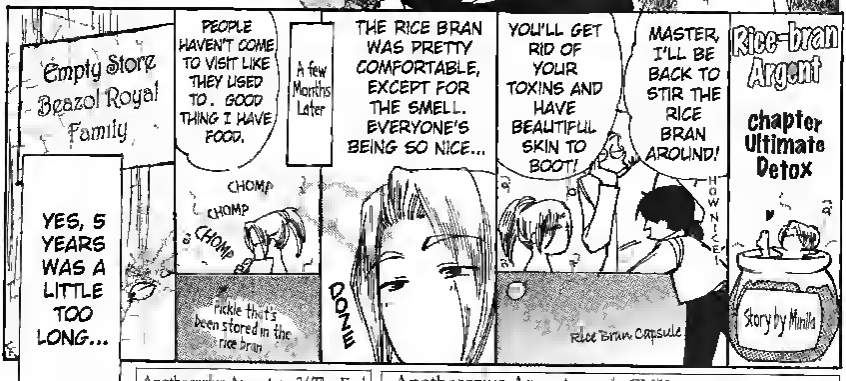
Our Primrose was infested with bugs. In the same vein, Primula is trying to deal with a new bug in her life, Lord.

I actually don't mind bugs. When I was young, I used to love collecting eggs and hatching them, for example. I wrote a book review in the 2nd grade. (I won some kind o award so I was featured in the school newspaper.) The subject of my book review was the observations of a dung beetle written by a famous entomologist, Jean Fabre. I remember feeling really sorry for dung beetles that get their precious dung balls stolen by other beetles. I was a weird kid. I still love to read about bugs. Their lives are simple, but quite beautiful and fascinating. I'm still not really open to the idea of eating them though. Maybe if it was dried and sprinkled onto rice or something...

This volume was assisted by Minila, S and I. I was responsible for the accessories and tiara on Lady Primula during the ball. S took care of the chandeliers and the architectural drawings. Thank you for a gorgeous job!

Anyway, that is all. I hope to see you again for the next volume!

2006 Feb Tomomi Yamashita


Empty Store
Beazol Royal Family
YES, 5 YEARS WAS A LITTLE TOO LONG...
PEOPLE HAVEN'T COME TO VISIT LIKE THEY USED TO. GOOD THING I HAVE FOOD.
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
Pickle that's been stored in the rice bran
A few Months Later
THE RICE BRAN WAS PRETTY COMFORTABLE, EXCEPT FOR THE SMELL. EVERYONE'S BEING SO NICE...
DONE!
YOU'LL GET RID OF YOUR TOXINS AND HAVE BEAUTIFUL SKIN TO BOOT!
MASTER, I'LL BE BACK TO STIR THE RICE BRAN AROUND!
HOWNCE!
Rice Bran Capsule
Rice-bran Argent
chapter Ultimate Detox
Story by Minila

Apothecarius Argentum 3/ The End

TO BE CONTINUED...

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